THE WEEKNIGHT EDIT

bon appétit

COZY UP WITH…

PORK AND TOMATILLO UDON
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VERY GOOD VEGAN TACOS
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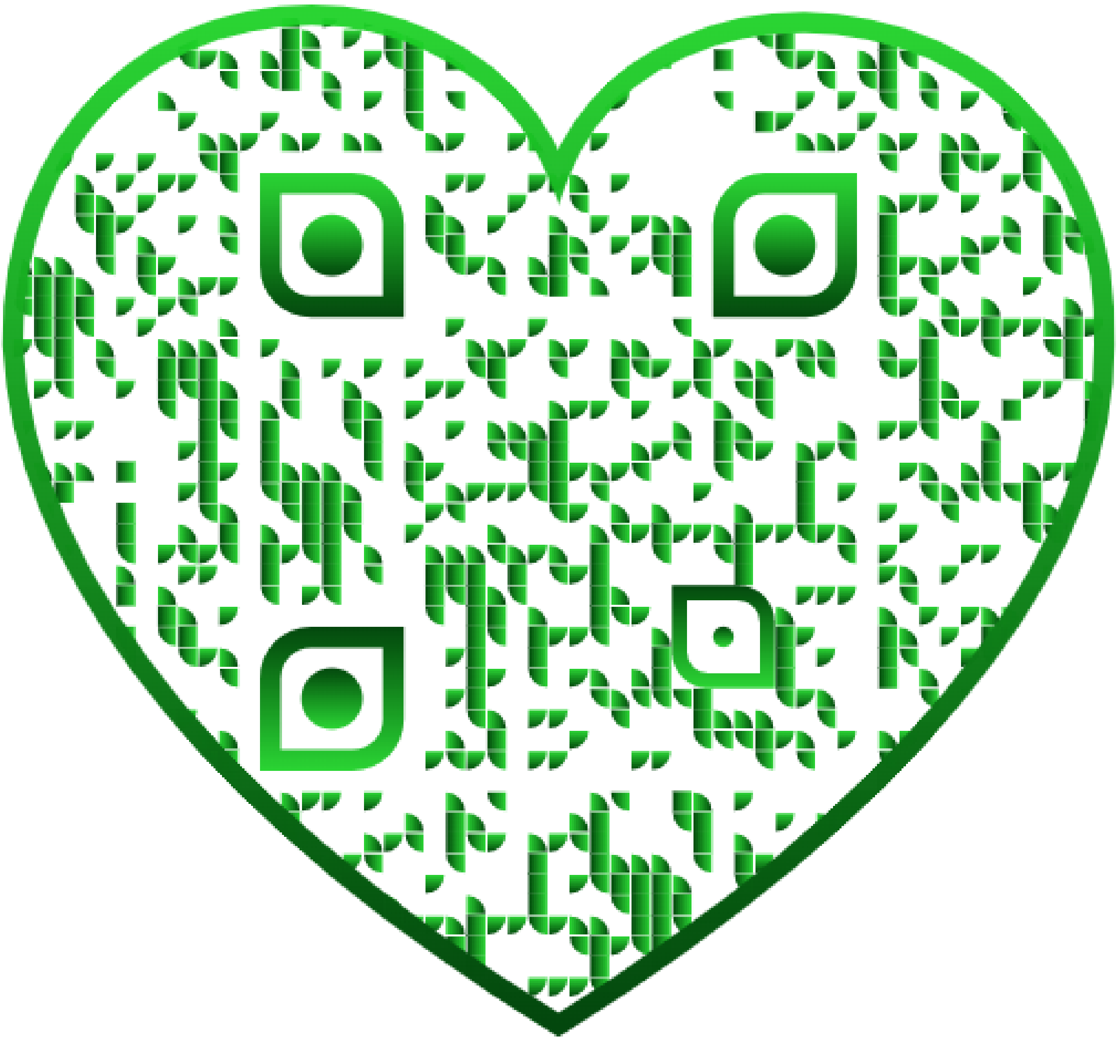
BLISTERED GREEN BEANS AND PANEER
P. 67



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Pork and Tomatillo Udon (for recipe, see p. 84). Photograph by Marcus McDonald. Food styling by Michelle Gatton. Prop styling by Andrea Bonin.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCUS McDONALD. FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON. PROP STYLING BY ANDREA BONIN.

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For safe meat preparation, reference the USDA website.

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Hidden Valley
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Ranch

From the Editor

Editor in chief Jamila Robinson shares what's on her mind this month

A salad that's even better on Day 2. *P. 63*

I'm an every day kind of cook, preparing as many dishes for myself as I can, fresh pasta here, a roast chicken there. Even after a long day at work, I love using my hands to bring a recipe to life and the satisfaction of eating something I've created.

Cooking gives my life balance since about half of the meals I eat during the week are in restaurants, which I enjoy immensely. But dining out does leave my next meal in question. Unless it's takeout from my neighborhood Thai spot, I rarely eat leftovers.

Cooking gives me answers, even when I don't know what I want to eat. A craving for an ingredient or a flavor can spark my desire to make an entire meal. I like to visit the grocery store or the farmers market several times a week, see what's available, and use whatever I find as inspiration for my next dinner. After, I will scroll through our Epicurious app and choose a recipe I haven't made before, or confirm that my reliable grilled fish indeed calls for dill rather than parsley.

My love for cooking doesn't wane on weeknights. I'm happy to steam mussels on a Thursday, dive into a cooking project in the middle of the night, and never wait for the weekend to make carrot cake when I'm thinking about frosting right now.

But what we all need during a busy week is ease, which is what you'll find with all the delicious recipes in this month's issue.

Jesse Szewczyk created five main courses that cook in a cast-iron skillet, a sheet pan, baking dish, rice cooker, and Dutch oven (page 38). Kendra Vaculin reimagined pantry staples into clever meals that are great for a school or date night (page 72). You'll even find make-ahead breakfasts (page 14) and a lunch salad (page 63) that will bring you joy on those in-office days.

These recipes are so good you'll find time to cook day and night.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RAINEY (PORTRAIT)

My Favorite Cooking Tools

RÖSLE JULIENNE PEELER
This harp-shaped peeler makes quick work of vegetables for garnishes, salads, and slaws. I've also used it for strips of chocolate and to make shoestring fries. *$22; amazon.com*

KITCHEN SCALE
If you've joined the BA Bake Club, you'll know that we highly recommend weighing your ingredients. Our team suggests investing in an Escali scale. *$27; amazon.com*

CUISINART FOOD PROCESSOR
I find grating cheese by hand incredibly inefficient. I let my 9-cup food processor handle it. The bowl and blades go right into the dishwasher. *$180; cuisinart.com*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIOTT JEROME BROWN JR. FOOD STYLING BY EMILIE FOSNOCHT. PROP STYLING BY CHRISTINA ALLEN.

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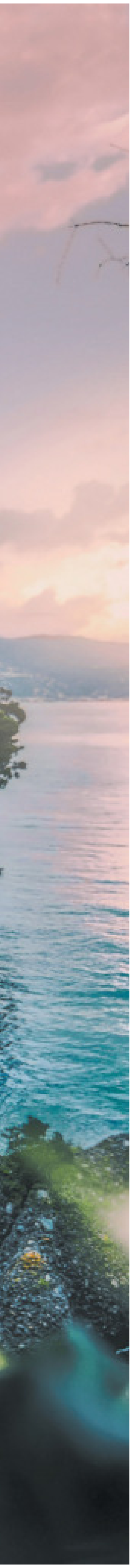

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TEST KITCHEN
TIPS, RECIPES, *and*
RECOMMENDATIONS

Table Talk

RESTAURANTS,
TRAVEL, *and* FOOD
FOR THOUGHT

The seafood gumbo at Saint John, a sister restaurant of Gris-Gris, both in New Orleans. (p.12)

TASTE OF THE TOWN: NEW ORLEANS GUMBO

Also, chocolate mousse for a party, the world of nonalcoholic spirits, and the tastiest vegan tacos.

The Best Bowls of Gumbo in New Orleans

Opinions about gumbo spots in the Big Easy are strong. Native **Megan Braden-Perry** shares her list of the city's eight best.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELLIOTT JEROME BROWN JR.

Where's the best gumbo in New Orleans? If you live here that's something you'll be asked all the time. Being a Creole girl from the 7th Ward—a multigenerational native New Orleanian at that—I naturally have opinions. I've been eating it since I was a bald-headed baby with only two teeth, and I've been making it since I was 18.

At its core, gumbo is somewhere between a soup and a stew, a mix of roux (flour and fat cooked until brown), stock, the Louisiana trinity (bell peppers, onion, and celery), plus meat, seafood—or both, and filé (ground sassafras).

Some people favor gumbo from Broad & Banks in Mid-City, while others prefer spicier versions served at places like Heard Dat Kitchen in Central City. No two restaurants make gumbo the same—even sister restaurants like Saint John and Gris-Gris. Nearly every chef's gumbo exemplar is the one they ate growing up. For me, it's my mama's and the gumbo Ms. Fields made in the cafeteria at McDonogh 39 elementary school, paired with a grilled cheese sandwich.

For many it's their family's or the one served at their office or school. New Orleanians are protective of gumbo and hypercritical of anything related to it.

"Anytime you talk about gumbo, it's a long conversation," says Frank Brigtsen, chef-owner of Brigtsen's. "Of all the dishes in Louisiana, gumbo really stands out as unique and identifies us as Louisiana people. And to me, the best gumbo in the world is the gumbo you grew up with. It's a very personal, passionate thing."

For the best gumbo, at least outside of our own homes, these eight restaurants are where I turn.

LEFT TO RIGHT: *Gumbo in action at Broad & Banks Seafood; the façade at Gabrielle; the family that runs Heard Dat Kitchen.*

BRIGTSEN'S

723 Dante St.

Dining here is like going to a relative's house for the holidays—an old home with a hodgepodge of art and seasonal decor on the walls and a team of kind people who treat you like family. The gumbo usually contains chicken, andouille, and filé.

Brigtsen trained under the late Paul Prudhomme, the chef credited with introducing Cajun cuisine to the masses. He uses two techniques that set his gumbo apart. First, the roux is allowed to cool. This allows the oil to rise to the top so he can skim the fat—ensuring ideal consistency for a slightly thickened soup. Second, Brigtsen browns the vegetables separately before adding them to the roux, giving his gumbo more dimension. "Almost all Cajun cooking is based on very humble ingredients," Brigtsen says. "The key to success is in the use of seasonings and techniques to build layers of flavor."

BROAD & BANKS SEAFOOD

342 S. Broad St.

If you are going to Broad & Banks, it's likely for gumbo and grilled cheese, a lunch combo long familiar to those who attend public schools across the city during the holidays. It's a staple at Ken Nguyen's cafeteria-style restaurant because his kids ate it at school. Nguyen's gumbo is packed with meat—smoked sausage, hot sausage, shrimp, and chicken. "Back in Vietnam we didn't have much," says Nguyen, 56, who immigrated to New Orleans from Vietnam in 1998. "Now that I'm in America and we have so much to eat, I include a lot."

Something that makes his gumbo special is that it doesn't use a traditional roux, instead deploying what Nguyen says is a technique found in Vietnamese soups like phở and bún bò huế that involves cooking down large amounts of stock made with bones and flavorful scraps of meat and vegetables.

DOOKY CHASE'S

2301 Orleans Ave.

There's so much about Dooky Chase's that can't be replicated: the collection of Black art on the walls, the stained glass hall partition, the fabrics on the chairs. And, of course, the gumbo. A bowl here and at sister restaurants Chapter IV in downtown New Orleans and Leah's Kitchen in the Louis Armstrong International Airport is traditional Black Creole gumbo, made with smoked sausage, local Creole chaurice hot sausage, chicken, shrimp, stewed-down ham hocks and veal, blue crab, and filé. On Fridays it's made with okra instead of filé.

Anchored by the latest in a lineage of family chefs, Zoe Chase and Edgar "Dook" Chase IV, little has changed since the restaurant opened in 1941. For many community elders, it feels the same as when Leah and Dooky Chase Jr. took over for Emily and Dooky Chase Sr. around 1946. The restaurant served as a headquarters for Civil Rights leaders in the '50s and '60s. For Dook, "the proudest moment" is when somebody who's "been coming to Dooky's for generations, they come in now and say, 'this gumbo tastes the exact same as when your grandmother was making it.' "

GABRIELLE

2441 Orleans Ave.

No two dining experiences at Gabrielle are the same, and that's what makes it so fabulous. Unlike most other restaurants where chefs make large batches of roux at once, chef-owner Greg Sonnier makes small-batch roux, slow-roasted in the oven. By cooking the roux this way, he finds it easier to control the darkness. Sonnier grew up on the light, low-temperature slow-roux gumbo of his New Iberia, Louisiana–born mother. But he also trained under Prudhomme. Here, Sonnier works to find ideal ingredients to pair with time-tested techniques. Guinea hen, a meat often used in Cajun cooking, is almost always in his gumbo, but he also makes different types of sausages so he can incorporate a variety of meats, such as alligator or rabbit, into the mix to "perk the gumbo up and make it special."

HEARD DAT KITCHEN

2520 Felicity St.

The restaurant is named after chef-owner Jeffery Heard, but you could also say it represents how customers find out about it: through word of mouth, some arriving phones out, displaying a photo of what a friend insisted they order. The gumbo is almost always one of them. Here, it's shrimp, chicken, sausage, and "a crazy amount of spices," as Heard puts. It's served with a grilled cheese sandwich and a side of potato salad. Heard worked at hotels in New Orleans for most of his adult life and was disappointed that he couldn't tell guests where to get good gumbo in the city. "It was always too thick in hotels," Heard says. "That's them not letting the roux cook and break down enough to get to the right consistency, so as soon as they put liquid on that roux, it swells and turns to paste."

LI'L DIZZY'S CAFE

1500 Esplanade Ave.

If you want to feel loved, walk in the door of Li'l Dizzy's. You're not only greeted by a chorus of staff, but by diners too. It's a must that you "speak" or "pass the time of day" in New Orleans, which means saying hello to everyone when you enter a room and greeting everyone you pass on the street.

The gumbo recipe here is about 60 years old. It's the same you'll find in *The Baquet Family Cookbook*, packed with ham, smoked sausage, crab, shrimp, and the Baquets' own hot sausage. Co-owner Arkesha Baquet credits her mother-in-law, Janet Jourdain Baquet, with some of Li'l Dizzy's most revolutionary concepts. "Gumbo is a simple dish," she says, "but it takes a lot of steps to get it right."

RIGHT: *The dining room at Dooky Chase's.* BELOW: *Gumbo from Broad & Banks Seafood.*

LIUZZA'S BY THE TRACK

1518 N. Lopez St.

If you even mention Liuzza's, someone will say you need to order the gumbo. If you post a photo and someone recognizes that you're there, they will ask how you liked the gumbo. The gumbo here consists of chicken, andouille, shrimp, okra, and tomato, made in 12-gallon batches three times a week.

Chef Road Runner has been single-handedly making all of it for roughly 20 years. Cooks often ask him to teach them how to make it, but he's a stickler for consistency, maintaining that, "I'm going to pass it on, but while I'm able to make it, I'm going to continue to make it."

GRIS-GRIS

1800 Magazine St.

The gumbo here is cognac-brown and rich with hunks of chicken and local andouille. It all starts with stock that's made daily using carcasses from chickens roasted for the gumbo, filling the restaurant with a scent that executive chef and owner Eric Cook says "smells like Thanksgiving."

Cook is from New Orleans but has lived in cities in and outside of Louisiana. Those experiences have shaped his approach to gumbo. "If someone doesn't tell me once a week that I burned my roux, then I'm not doing it right," he says.

Cook learned to make a darker seafood-free gumbo from a friend's mom, who lived "down the bayou" just outside Lafayette. People don't always associate New Orleans with this style of gumbo, but it's just as prevalent here because so many New Orleanians have down-the-bayou roots.

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RISE AND DINE

These make-ahead breakfasts will turn you into a morning person

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRAVIS RAINEY

For many of us breakfast really is the most important meal of the day. Picture a quiet sip of tea on the porch, the percolation of salted butter on hot toast, the satisfying crack of an egg shell. But not every morning is a weekend one, when you can gingerly roll omelets or leisurely flip pancakes. Most days are a tumult of activity, requiring quick sustenance that takes little effort. That's where these recipes come in. Designed to be batched and made ahead, each keeps in the fridge for up to five days, enough to sustain you through the week.

You'll find a tangy chia pudding with a bolstering dose of caffeine. Layered over crushed fruit, it holds up wondrously thanks to the tiny seeds' absorptive powers. There's also a savory breakfast casserole dotted with bacon, cheddar, and pickled jalapeños. Protein-laden, easy to portion, and highly portable, the dish takes advantage of boxed corn muffin mix, so your measuring (and dirty dishes) are kept to a minimum. And finally, we've got dairy-free overnight oats inspired by horchata. Loaded with spices, roasted nuts, and puffed rice, the oats are satiating, and the flavors intensify with each passing day. Whichever you go with, consider it a reward for not hitting the snooze button. —*Shilpa Uskokovic*

MATCHA-MANGO CHIA PUDDING

RECIPE BY KATE KASSIN

Whisk **3½ cups unsweetened nut or alternative milk (such as almond or coconut)**, **¾ cup chia seeds**, **2 Tbsp. honey**, **1 Tbsp. matcha powder**, and **½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt** in a large bowl to combine. Let sit 15 minutes.

Stir pudding well and let sit again until chia seeds are plump, about 15 minutes longer.

Meanwhile, using a rolling pin, smash **one 16-oz. bag frozen mango, thawed** (still in the bag), to make a mostly smooth mash (some small pieces will remain). Divide smashed mango among 4–6 small glasses or jars or other airtight containers and spoon chia pudding on top, dividing evenly.

DO AHEAD: Chia puddings can be made 5 days ahead. Cover and chill. *4–6 servings*

FOOD STYLING BY TANEKA MORRIS. PROP STYLING BY TIM FERRO.

CORNBREAD BREAKFAST CASSEROLE

RECIPE BY
SHILPA USKOKOVIC

Place a rack in middle of oven; preheat to 350°. Generously coat a 13x9" baking dish with **nonstick vegetable oil spray**. Cook **4 oz. bacon (4–6 slices)** in a dry large skillet, preferably nonstick, over medium heat, turning occasionally, until browned and crisp, 8–10 minutes; transfer to paper towels to drain. Let sit until cool enough to handle, then finely chop.

Whisk **one 8.5-oz. box corn muffin mix** (preferably Jiffy) and **2 cups half-and-half** in a medium bowl until smooth. Add **6 large eggs** and **2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt** and whisk again to combine. Stir in bacon, **½ cup coarsely grated extra-sharp cheddar**, **½ cup chopped drained pickled jalapeños, patted dry**, and **2 Tbsp. finely chopped chives**; scrape batter into prepared pan. Bake casserole until slightly puffed and just set (center should still wobble slightly when casserole is gently shaken), 25–30 minutes. Let cool 10–15 minutes before cutting into squares.

DO AHEAD: Casserole can be baked 5 days ahead. Let cool; cover and chill.

6–8 servings

HORCHATA OVERNIGHT OATS

RECIPE BY INÉS ANGUIANO

Stir **3 cups old-fashioned oats**, **2½ cups rice milk**, **½ cup unsalted roasted almonds, coarsely chopped**, **¼ cup pure maple syrup**, **1 Tbsp. vanilla bean paste or vanilla extract**, **1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt**, and **1 tsp. ground cinnamon** in a medium bowl to combine. Transfer to an airtight container; cover and chill at least 12 hours.

When ready to serve, divide overnight oats among bowls and top each portion with **puffed rice cereal** (if using), more almonds, and a sprinkle of cinnamon.

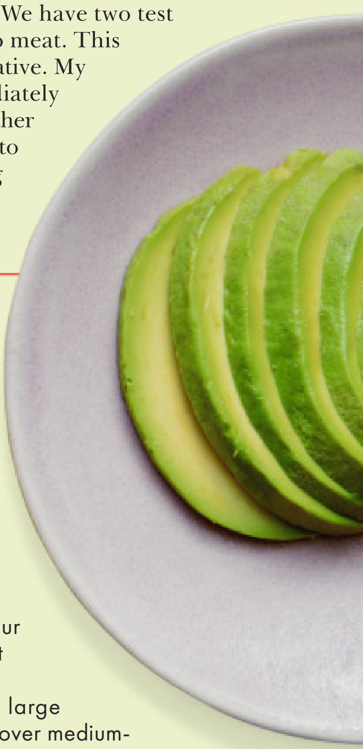
DO AHEAD: Overnight oats can be made 5 days ahead. Keep chilled. *4–6 servings*

Vegan Tacos, My Beloved Cat, and the Album I Have on Repeat

EMMA LAPERRUQUE LEADS COOKING COVERAGE AT BON APPÉTIT AND EPICURIOUS. SHE SHARES WHAT BOOSTS HER WELL-BEING PLUS HER GO-TO TACO RECIPE.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRAVIS RAINEY

At the Bon Appétit office, where I lead our cooking coverage, I eat anything and everything. (We have two test kitchen tastings most days. It's serious around here!) But at home I feel my best when I forgo meat. This is for all sorts of reasons: financial, environmental, ethical. But it also encourages me to get creative. My go-to tacos, for instance, hinge on soy curls—an underrated ingredient one of my coworkers immediately ordered after tasting (Butler's Soy Curls; $9; amazon.com). For me, the combo of trying new things (whether that's what I'm eating for dinner or listening to while cooking) and relying on old standbys (like my go-to morning workout and source of caffeine) keeps me grounded. Read on for what's putting a spring in my step. I hope you can take a nugget or three for yourself.



VERY GOOD VEGAN TACOS

4–6 servings

These easy tacos are startlingly satisfying, all thanks to one ingredient—soy curls. Elusive in stores but available online (with thousands of glowing reviews), this plant-based protein is made solely from soybeans, just like tofu. But unlike tofu, which is perishable, unopened packages of soy curls are shelf-stable. This means you can keep them in your pantry (or in the fridge or freezer for longer) and always be minutes away from a budget-friendly, fiber-rich meal.

1 8-oz. package soy curls
3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
3 Tbsp. nutritional yeast
4 tsp. ground cumin
1 Tbsp. smoked paprika
2 tsp. garlic powder
2 tsp. onion powder
½ tsp. cayenne pepper
1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
⅓ cup vegetable oil
Warm corn tortillas, salsa, vegan sour cream (optional), thinly sliced radishes, sliced avocado, chopped cilantro, hot sauce, and lime wedges (for serving)

Place soy curls in a medium heatproof bowl. Heat broth in a small saucepan over medium-high, until warm, about 5 minutes. Add nutritional yeast and stir to dissolve. Pour over soy curls; weigh down with a small plate to keep submerged. Let sit until hydrated, 10–15 minutes.

Meanwhile, mix cumin, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, cayenne, and 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt in a small bowl to combine.

Drain soy curls in a fine-mesh sieve, squeezing gently to remove excess liquid. Return to bowl and sprinkle in spice mixture; toss to coat soy curls evenly (your hands are great for this).

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Add soy curls and toss to coat in oil. Spread out into a single layer and cook, tossing occasionally, until browned and crisp in spots, 8–10 minutes. Taste and season with more salt if needed.

Build tacos with tortillas, soy curls, salsa, vegan sour cream (if using), radishes, avocado, and cilantro. Serve with hot sauce and lime wedges.

EMMA'S FEEL-GOOD FIVE

WHAT'S YOUR GO-TO ALBUM RIGHT NOW?
MOTOMAMI BY ROSALÍA

HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?
A YOGA WITH ADRIENE CLASS ON YOUTUBE (GUEST-STARRING HER DOG, BENJI)

DRINK ORDER AT HOME?
GENMAICHA, BEST ENJOYED IN A FLUFFY ROBE

BEST THING YOU'VE BOUGHT FOR YOUR KITCHEN THIS YEAR?
A CUSHIONED (WASHABLE!) RUG FROM RUGGABLE

WHAT CHEERS YOU UP NO MATTER WHAT?
PETTING MY CAT, BUTTER, AND TELLING HER HOW PRETTY SHE IS

FOOD STYLING BY LUCIANA LAMBOY. PROP STYLING BY ALEXANDRA MASSILLON.

Dinner Is Served

We're giving hearty lentil soup a kick with green curry paste, baking a no-flip Tortilla Española, riffing on Laotian larb with nutty, crumbly tempeh, and more

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELLIOTT JEROME BROWN JR.

GREEN CURRY LENTILS AND PASTA

This comforting, rich lentil soup is loaded with flavor and texture. Green curry paste packs plenty of punch, while coconut milk adds creaminess; canned lentils make it quick.

RECIPE BY SHILPA USKOKOVIC

4 SERVINGS

2	Tbsp. vegetable oil
1	large carrot, halved lengthwise, thinly sliced into half-moons
1	medium red onion, thinly sliced
4	garlic cloves, finely chopped
¼	cup green curry paste (preferably Maesri)
1	tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
2	15-oz. cans lentils, rinsed
2	13.5-oz. cans unsweetened coconut milk, divided
4	oz. ditalini (about 1 cup)
5	oz. baby spinach
2	Tbsp. fresh lime juice

1. Heat oil in a medium Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium. Add carrot, red onion, garlic, curry paste, and 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt. Cook, stirring and scraping bottom of pot often, until onion is translucent and paste is fragrant, slightly darkened in color, and sticking to pot, 6–8 minutes.

2. Add lentils, 1 can coconut milk, and 1 cup water and bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally and adjusting heat as needed to maintain a simmer, until carrot is tender, 8–10 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, cook ditalini in a medium pot of boiling salted water just until very al dente, about 1 minute less than package directions; drain.

4. Add spinach, ditalini, and remaining 1 can coconut milk to pot with lentils and stir well to combine. Cook until soup comes to a boil and spinach is tender and wilted, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in lime juice. Taste soup and season with more salt if needed. Ladle into bowls to serve.

FOOD STYLING BY EMILIE FOSNOCHT. PROP STYLING BY CHRISTINA ALLEN.

COCONUT TEMPEH LARB

This riff on the classic Laotian salad uses crumbled tempeh—slightly nutty in flavor and substantial in texture—in place of ground meat. The larb can be served cold and works well as leftovers throughout the week; just add the mint right before serving.

RECIPE BY KENDRA VACULIN

4 SERVINGS

- 1 Tbsp. plus ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ¾ cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 2 8-oz. packages tempeh, crumbled into small pieces
- 1 Fresno chile, thinly sliced
- 1 3" piece ginger, peeled, finely grated
- 4 garlic cloves, finely grated
- 2 Tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp. fish sauce
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced
- ⅓ cup fresh lime juice
- ½ cup mint leaves, divided
- Cabbage leaves and cucumber spears (for serving)

1. Heat 1 Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add coconut and cook, stirring, until golden and fragrant, about 1 minute. Transfer to a large bowl.

2. Heat remaining ¼ cup oil in same skillet over medium-high. Arrange tempeh in an even layer; cook, undisturbed, until lightly browned underneath, about 3 minutes. Stir, then continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until browned in spots, about 3 minutes. Add chile, ginger, and garlic; cook, stirring, until combined, about 30 seconds. Add soy sauce and fish sauce; cook, stirring, until coated, about 30 seconds.

3. Scrape tempeh mixture into bowl with toasted coconut. Add red onion, lime juice, and most of the mint and toss to combine.

4. Transfer larb to a platter; top with remaining mint. Serve with cabbage and cucumbers.

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FIVE-SPICE BEEF NOODLE SOUP

Inspired by the flavors of Vietnamese pho, this ground beef and rice noodle soup comes together in only 20 minutes. Don't skip the skimming step: It keeps the broth clear and lets the aromas of the Chinese five spice shine through.

RECIPE BY KENDRA VACULIN

4 SERVINGS

8 oz. thin rice noodles (such as banh pho)
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
1 lb. ground beef
1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt
2 tsp. Chinese five-spice powder
Freshly ground pepper
5 garlic cloves, finely grated
1 2" piece ginger, peeled, finely grated
1 Tbsp. fish sauce
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
Cilantro leaves with tender stems, Thai basil or mint leaves, mung bean sprouts, sliced jalapeño, hoisin sauce, sriracha, and lime wedges (for serving)

1. Place noodles in a large bowl and pour in room-temperature water to cover; let soak until ready to use to rehydrate and soften.

2. Heat oil in a medium Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium-high. Cook onion, stirring occasionally, until just starting to soften, about 2 minutes. Add beef and salt; cook, stirring and breaking up meat with a wooden spoon, until partially browned, about 2 minutes. Add five-spice powder, season with pepper, and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until just cooked through, about 3 minutes. Pour off excess fat; discard.

3. Add garlic, ginger, and fish sauce to meat mixture in pot and cook, stirring occasionally, until combined and fragrant, about 1 minute. Pour in broth and 5 cups water, then increase heat to high and bring to a boil, skimming any foam from surface.

4. Drain noodles and add to soup. Cook according to package directions until just cooked through. Remove soup from heat.

5. Ladle soup into bowls and top with cilantro, Thai basil, bean sprouts, and jalapeño. Serve with hoisin, sriracha, and lime wedges.

THE HOLIDAY ISSUE
bon appétit
SPARKLE & CHEER

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SOUR-CREAM-AND-ONION TORTILLA ESPAÑOLA

Tortilla Española is a classic Spanish tapa made of scrambled eggs and tender potatoes cooked into a sliceable round omelet. This version—inspired by a twist popularized by celebrated Spanish chef Ferran Adrià—swaps in crispy potato chips for raw potatoes. That means superthin layers of potato without having to use a mandoline. Plus, this version bakes in the oven—no flipping required.

RECIPE BY KENDRA VACULIN

4 SERVINGS

2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, thinly sliced
Kosher salt
9 large eggs
½ cup sour cream
5 oz. sour cream and onion potato chips, preferably kettle-style
2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
Thinly sliced chives (for serving)

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Heat oil in a medium ovenproof nonstick skillet over medium. Add onion, season with salt, and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and browned, 13–16 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, whisk eggs and sour cream in a medium bowl until well combined; season with salt. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold in potato chips. Let sit 3 minutes to soften potato chips.

3. Scrape cooked onion into potato chip mixture and fold in to evenly distribute.

4. Melt butter in same skillet over medium heat. Pour in tortilla mixture and spread out into an even layer. Transfer skillet to oven and bake until tortilla is lightly browned on top and just set, 11–13 minutes.

5. Scatter some chives over tortilla just before serving.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ISA ZAPATA. FOOD STYLING BY EMILIE FOSNOCHT. PROP STYLING BY CHRISTINA ALLEN.

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Since printing our first issue in 1956, *Bon Appétit* has published tens of thousands of recipes. It would take literal decades to cook them all. So our editors handpicked the 56 recipes you must make this year, from weeknight-ready meatballs to an instant-classic chocolate cake. The entire collection launches online on January 14—scan the QR code below to check it out—and we're sharing an early peek here with one of our favorite chicken dinners. Let's cook!

PHOTOGRAPH BY ISA ZAPATA

GOLDEN CHICKEN

WHY WE LOVE IT

For proof that chicken breasts are weeknight-dinner workhorses—and company-worthy as well—look no further than Rachel Gurjar's Golden Chicken With Mustard and Shallots. Its vibrant, sunny sauce made with Dijon, turmeric, honey, and cream would make an old boot taste good. Cooking chicken in it keeps the meat moist and tender, imbued with richness and a touch of sweetness. When we first tasted it in the test kitchen, I hovered over the pan while everyone else took their portion so I could pounce and pack up the rest for myself. Since then it's made countless appearances in my home and converted quite a few white-meat-avoiders too. *—Kendra Vaculin*

2 SERVINGS

1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1½ tsp. ground turmeric, divided
1½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt, divided
2 large skinless, boneless chicken breasts (about 1½ lb. total)
2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
2 medium shallots, thinly sliced
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 cup heavy cream
3 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
1 Tbsp. honey
1 tsp. freshly ground pepper
3 sprigs thyme; plus leaves for serving (optional)
Toasted country-style bread or steamed rice (for serving)

Preheat oven to 375°. Mix flour, 1 tsp. turmeric, and ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt in a small bowl to combine. Sprinkle flour mixture all over chicken breasts.

Heat 1 Tbsp. oil in a medium ovenproof skillet over medium-high. Add chicken and cook, turning halfway through, until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a large plate.

Reduce heat to medium and heat remaining 1 Tbsp. oil in same skillet. Add shallots and garlic and cook, stirring often, until shallots are translucent, about 4 minutes. Add cream, Dijon mustard, honey, pepper, 3 thyme sprigs, remaining 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and remaining ½ tsp. ground turmeric and stir to combine. Bring to a simmer, then return chicken and any accumulated juices on plate to skillet.

Transfer skillet to oven and bake until sauce is slightly thickened and chicken is cooked through (an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of breasts should register 160°), 20–25 minutes. Remove skillet from oven and transfer chicken to a cutting board. Let rest 5 minutes.

Slice chicken against the grain ¼" thick, then return to sauce in pan. Remove thyme sprigs and discard if desired; scatter thyme leaves over if using. Serve chicken with bread or rice.

FOOD STYLING BY KAT BOYTSOVA. PROP STYLING BY STEPHANIE DE LUCA.

Scan the QR code to see the full Bon Appétit 56 and to access our archive of more than 60,000 recipes.

All You Can Eat

This party-sized dessert is inspired by the French bistro tradition to serve one giant bowl of mousse à volonté or "as you will"

BY KENDRA VACULIN ■ PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RAINEY

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE FOR A PARTY

12–16 SERVINGS

Mousse techniques can vary quite a bit, but we found a method that produces a fluffy texture and complex, chocolaty flavor. Melting the chopped chocolate directly in the heavy cream creates a velvety base for folding in whipped egg whites.

1 lb. semisweet chocolate, chopped (such as Guittard 64%)
2 cups heavy cream
7 large egg yolks, room temperature
3 Tbsp. plus ⅓ cup (105 g) sugar
½ tsp. vanilla extract
5 large egg whites, room temperature
¾ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt
Whipped cream, maraschino cherries (such as Luxardo), and extra-virgin olive oil (for serving)
Flaky sea salt

Heat chocolate and heavy cream in a medium heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water (bowl should not touch water), stirring occasionally with a heatproof rubber spatula, until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Remove bowl from heat.

Vigorously whisk egg yolks and 3 Tbsp. (38 g) sugar in a large bowl to dissolve sugar, about 2 minutes. Add a small amount of chocolate mixture, whisking constantly until combined (doing this warms the eggs without scrambling them). Add remaining chocolate mixture, whisking constantly until combined, then whisk in vanilla. Let cool.

Meanwhile, beat egg whites and kosher salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment on medium speed until foamy. With the motor running, gradually sprinkle in remaining ⅓ cup (67 g) sugar and beat until soft peaks form.

Gently fold half of egg white mixture into cooled chocolate mixture until mostly combined, then fold in remaining egg white mixture. Scrape chocolate mousse into a large serving bowl; cover with plastic wrap (do not let it touch the surface of the mousse). Chill at least 5 hours to set up.

Serve chocolate mousse with whipped cream, maraschino cherries, oil, and sea salt in small bowls on the side for topping as desired.

DO AHEAD: Mousse can be made 2 days ahead. Keep chilled.

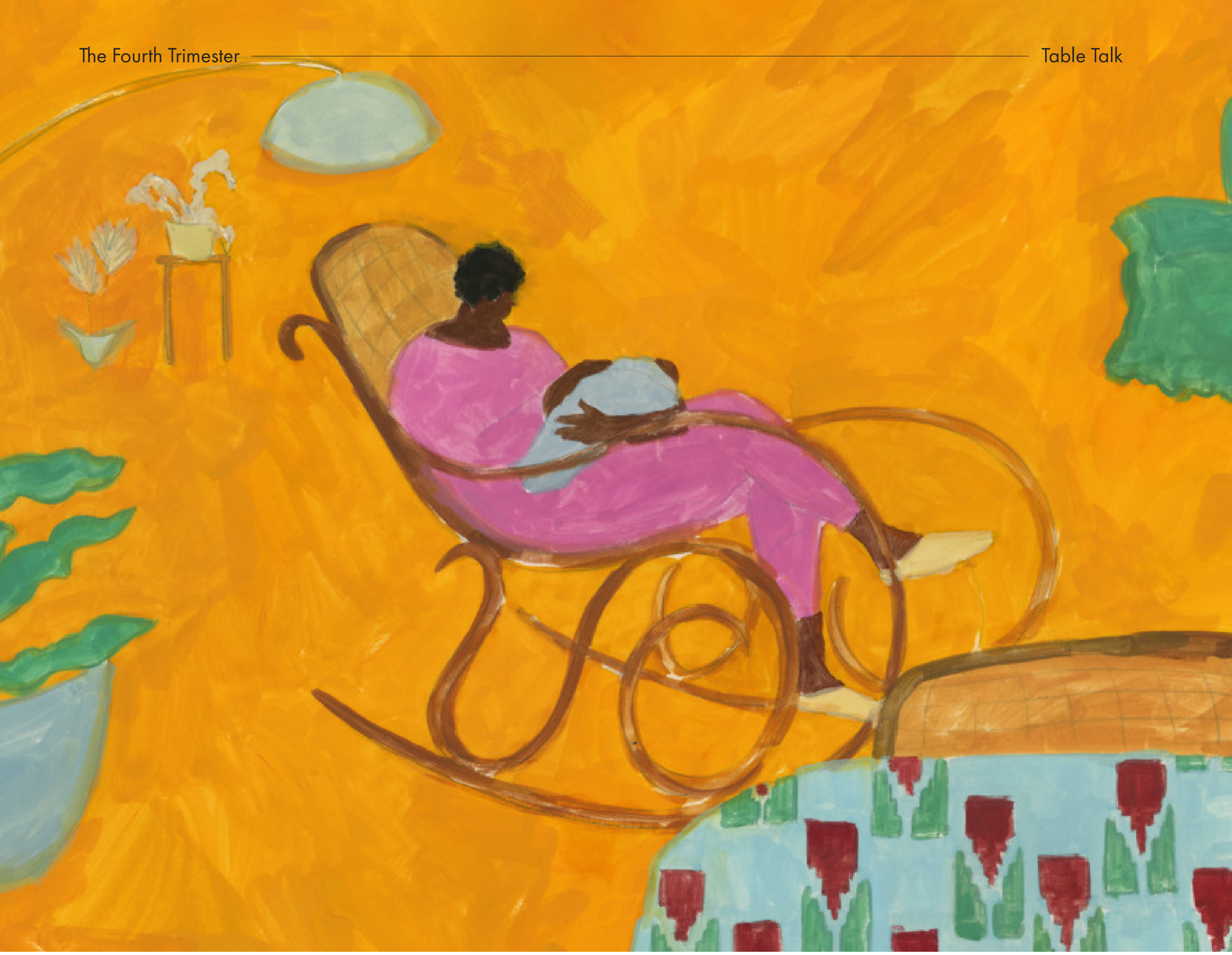
PARTY PLANNER

GREAT FOR
Valentine's Day gatherings, laid-back dinner parties, and any other celebration that requires something both sweet and shareable.

USE THE RIGHT VESSEL
Grab your biggest serving bowl and leave at least an inch of space between the lip of the bowl and the top of the mousse. This will keep the plastic wrap off the surface and ensure a smooth result.

DRESS IT UP
Pair with whipped cream and Luxardo cherries, or olive oil and flaky sea salt—or all of the above.

FOOD STYLING BY KAITLIN WAYNE. PROP STYLING BY STEPHANIE DE LUCA.



Making Bouyon Our Own

After my daughter's birth, her father brought Haiti home to us with this comforting soup

BY LESLEY ENSTON
ILLUSTRATION BY DROR COHEN
PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIOTT JEROME BROWN JR.

In 2018, when our daughter was born, her father, Atibon, longed for Haiti. He'd been separated from his home country since 2010, just after that year's earthquake. The ever-present and escalating political situation, among other reasons, kept him from going back. While Brooklyn, where we lived, has one of the largest Haitian diasporas in the world, he still yearned to find ways to bring his native land into our home.

Nearly all things food-related fall under my purview in the household, but when I gave birth to Desalin, I could no longer take the lead with mealtime.

I found myself incapacitated, chained to the bed with a tiny, adorable, totally alien package that had no interest in being put down for anything like cooking. The first night home we devoured a meal prepared by my friend Lukas, who picked us up from the hospital. However, Desalin's second day of life rolled around and I was clueless.

"I'll make a bouyon," Atibon announced.

The Haitian equivalent of chicken noodle soup, bouyon is the folk remedy to a lot of ailments: Feel a cold coming on? Bouyon. Need rejuvenation? Bouyon. It's freezing and you're grumpy? Bouyon! It is a dish as likely to be made in your grandmother's home as ordered in a restaurant, and everyone has their own version. As I stared at my daughter's little face, I mumbled some sort of agreement.

Atibon went out to the grocery store, returned quickly, and disappeared into the kitchen. Shortly, the telltale signs of his cooking emerged from there: festive and blaring konpa, the rhythmic grind of the pilon, the smell of simmering garlic, thyme, and cloves, and occasional shouted conversations about Haitian politics on the phone.

For years, whenever I made dinner, Atibon would tell me to make it more Haitian. Add whole cloves to this, Scotch bonnets to that, maybe some parsley and thyme?

"Not everything has to be Haitian!" I'd exclaim, though I couldn't deny that the suggestions were good ones. He didn't cook often, but when he did it

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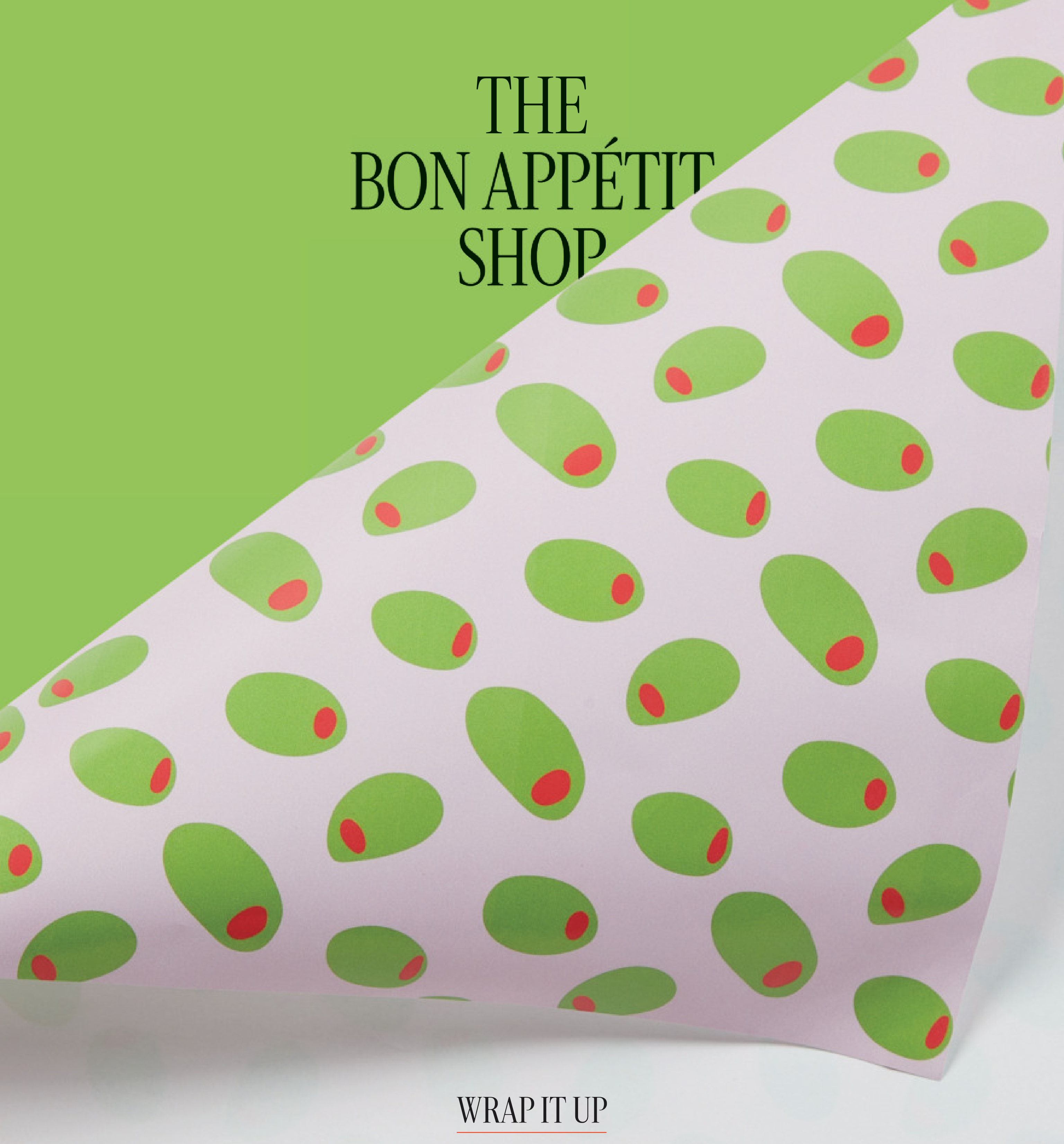
The Fourth Trimester is a series where parents share the meals that nourished them postpartum. For more, head to bonappetit.com/fourth-trimester.



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WRAP IT UP

bon appétit

was Haitian food with almost religious fervor. It was a way to connect to his ancestors, to where he grew up between Port-au-Prince and Les Cayes.

Now he was our designated cook—and I enjoyed it. I savored that first bowl of bouyon. I relaxed into that rich broth full of garlic, epis, chicken bones, and cloves. It made me feel like everything was going to be okay, like I could, in fact, take care of this strange and beautiful creature in my arms.

With every waft of steam coming from the bowl, I could feel that Atibon had channeled his love of this new baby and his care for me into this soup. In this moment of vulnerability, he felt his heritage could take care of me.

I understood his need to inject his treasured culture into our lives, especially when things back home were so heartbreaking. I also understood that, while we couldn't take her to his home, a place he spoke of with great reverence, he could, at least, bring home to us by way of this dish.

In the following weeks he made big batches, and I ate Atibon's bouyon for most of Desalin's first month of life. Its ingredients would vary based on my requests or what was on hand. While traditional bouyon is made with beef, Atibon always used chicken, as he'd developed a mistrust of factory-farmed beef in the US. He'd add whatever greens we had, though he preferred watercress and spinach. Sometimes he'd add chayote, called mirliton in Haitian Kreyòl, because Haitians believe it could help with lactation. The provisions (called viv) would sometimes change, but his favorite plantains (bannann) and patat (batatas) were a must. Though they are a common component, he never included the flour dumplings Haitians call donbwèy, partially out of laziness and partially from a firm belief that they add nothing to the dish. We made each bouyon our own.

Haiti was everywhere in the apartment those days. We were immersed in the sounds of konpa and vodoun drumming and the warm scents of Haitian herbs and spices. The bouyon was even getting passed on to Desalin via breast milk. It's no wonder that today, as a six-year-old, it's one of her favorite things to eat. And while she will eat it if I make it, she'll only really get excited about it if it's his. It is still the answer to a runny nose or an "I don't feel so good," and it's been one of the few dishes impervious to the sudden distrust of flavorful foods that seems to emerge once children hit a school age in North America. As she eats it, we often subject her to stories of Atibon's childhood or lessons in Haitian Kreyòl.

While many things have changed in our household in the years since, our commitment to connecting our daughter to her Caribbean heritage, especially on the plate, has remained constant. Today her pride in her Haitian identity runs deep. And it may have all started in a bowl of bouyon. ♦

LESLEY ENSTON
is a recipe developer
and the author
of the cookbook
Belly Full: Exploring Caribbean Cuisine.

HAITIAN BOUYON

4–6 SERVINGS

To cut skin-on, bone-in chicken thighs into pieces is easier than you may think with the right tool and technique. Place them skin side down on your cutting board, then, using a heavy chef's knife, make a cut in the flesh where you want to chop through it. Focusing on the mark, hold the knife firmly, pull back and come down hard on it. You may have to do this a few times, but the knife will cut through the bone, and you'll be amazed how you're able to hit the same spot again and again. This recipe uses chef and cookbook author Gregory Gourdet's epis recipe that he created for his beans and rice dish Diri Kole ak Pwa featured in the February 2022 issue of *Bon Appétit;* you can also use Enston's, which she wrote about for the site, bonappetit.com/story/epis-seasoning.

EPIS

½ small green bell pepper, halved, ribs and seeds removed, coarsely chopped
½ small white onion, coarsely chopped
½ large shallot, coarsely chopped
1 scallion, coarsely chopped
½ celery stalk, coarsely chopped
½ Scotch bonnet chile
2 garlic cloves
1 whole clove
½ cup (lightly packed) cilantro leaves with tender stems
½ cup (lightly packed) parsley leaves with tender stems
2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tbsp. thyme leaves
2¼ tsp. distilled white vinegar
2¼ tsp. fresh lime juice

BOUYON

1 medium yellow onion, coarsely chopped
3 medium carrots, peeled, sliced crosswise ½" thick
Juice of 1 lime
6 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 large sprig thyme, leaves picked
5 whole cloves
1½ lb. skin-on, bone-in chicken thighs (about 4), cut into bite-size pieces
¼ cup coarsely chopped parsley
2 Tbsp. distilled white vinegar
1 tsp. freshly ground pepper
3½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or 2¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, divided
1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 Scotch bonnet chile
1 lb. patat (boniato, batata, or Caribbean sweet potato; about 1), scrubbed, halved if large
2 green plantains, peeled, sliced crosswise 1" thick
1 lb. yellow yam (about 1), peeled, cut into 2" pieces
1 bunch watercress or spinach, tough stems removed, or kale, collard greens, or Swiss chard, chopped

EPIS Pulse bell pepper, white onion, shallot, scallion, celery, chile, garlic, clove, cilantro, parsley, oil, thyme, vinegar, and lime juice in a food processor or blender until a chunky sauce forms; set aside.

DO AHEAD: Epis can be made 4 days ahead. Transfer to an airtight container; cover and chill.

BOUYON Mix yellow onion, carrots, lime juice, garlic, thyme, cloves, chicken, parsley, vinegar, pepper, 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and ¼ cup epis in a large Dutch oven or other heavy pot set over low heat to combine. Drizzle oil over and nestle in chile. Cover pot, bring to a simmer, and cook until juices are slowly bubbling and chicken is mostly cooked through, 30–35 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook patat in a large pot of boiling water until halfway to tender, 10–15 minutes. Add plantains and yam; cook until patat, plantains, and yam are fork-tender, 10–15 minutes. (If patat needs more time, remove plantains and yam and boil patat longer.)

Transfer patat to a cutting board with a slotted spoon; let cool. Transfer plantains and yam to pot with chicken, then add 4 cups patat cooking liquid and bring to a boil. Add remaining 1½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 tsp. Morton salt, reduce heat, and simmer, uncovered, until vegetables and chicken are tender and liquid is thickened, 15–20 minutes.

Using a paring knife, peel patat; cut into 1½"–2" pieces. Stir into bouyon along with watercress and cook just until greens are wilted. Taste bouyon and season with more salt if needed. Ladle into bowls.

FOOD STYLING BY MIEKO TAKAHASHI. PROP STYLING BY EMMA RINGNESS.

Spirited Away

Nonalcoholic cocktails aren't just a stand-in for the real thing—they mark a new world of flavors. Here's how to explore the best in spirit-free drinks so you can make any gathering inclusive, tasty, and memorable.

BY JOSEPH HERNANDEZ • PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCUS McDONALD

Nonalcoholic cocktails have entered their Sophisticated Era. In recent years mocktails have evolved beyond simply combining juice, soda, and grenadine thanks to bartenders and producers embracing botanicals, teas, and craft syrups to create complex beverages that put these drinks on par with their spirited counterparts. This shift in approach invites us to appreciate them on their own terms, free from the expectations of traditional spirits.

Today nonalcoholic products like Lyre's, Seedlip, and Ghia, to name a few, are designed to deliver layers of flavor and depth in a bottle, but there's still a lingering perception that these products are one-to-one swaps for vodka, gin, whiskey, and other traditional spirits. But water-based distillates by their very nature behave differently from alcohol.

"In many cases alcohol is better at extracting flavor than water," says Seth O'Malley, distiller of Wilderton, a nonalcoholic distillery in Hood River, just outside Portland, Oregon. Chemically, alcohol is a solvent that expresses the essence of its ingredients—like botanicals, fruits, and spices—with clarity, complexity, and depth. Trying to distill or infuse water will result in a less-intense or muted product.

That's not to say it's impossible. The explosion of the category is a result of enthusiastic experimentation, with some producers employing an apothecary's approach to ingredients—the category is not bound to what was done before. Think cinchona bark, yuzu, orris root, even sandalwood. On the front lines, bartenders are embracing the challenge of developing new drinks as intriguing as regular spirits.

DIRTY SPRITZ

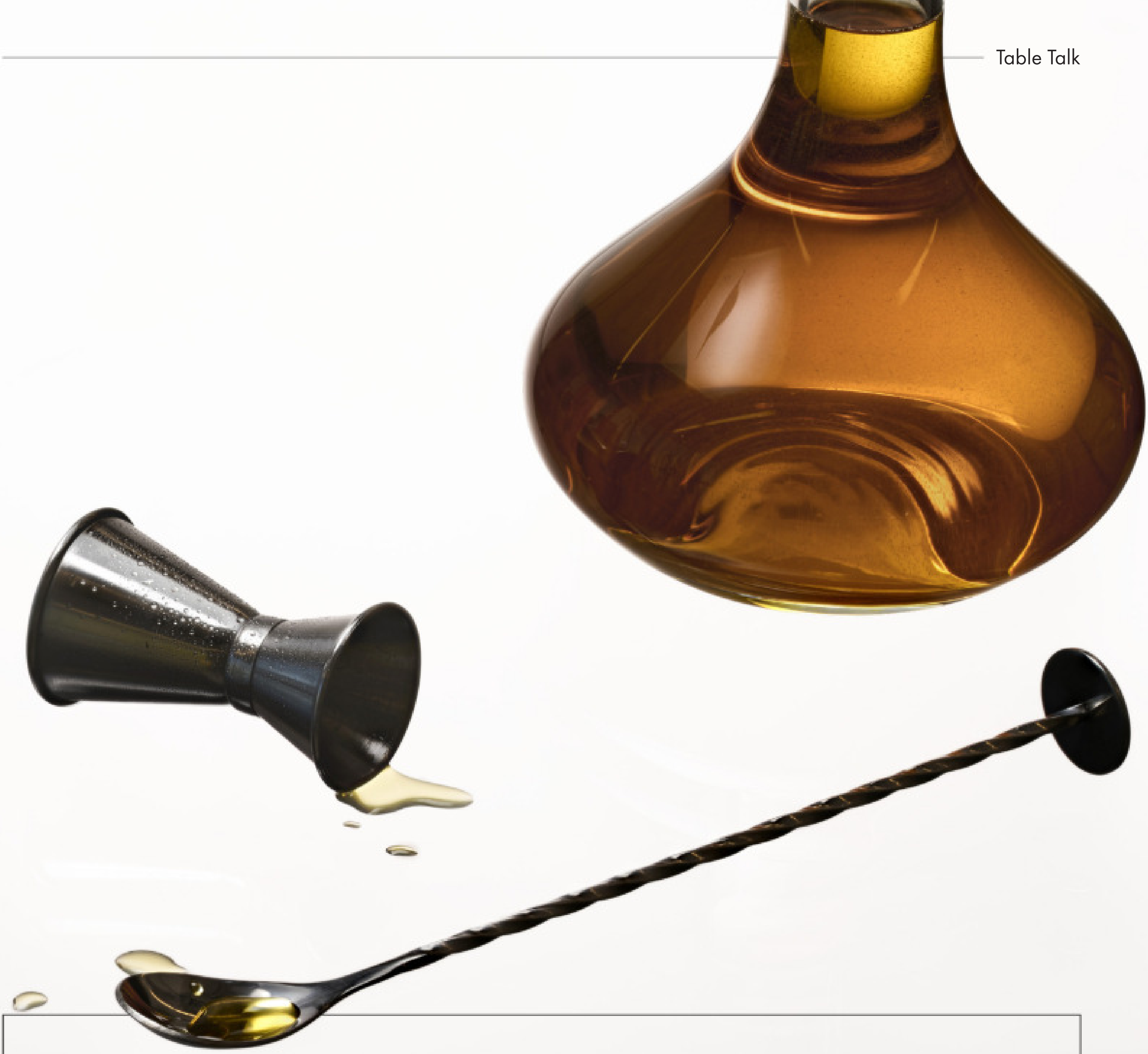
MAKES 1

A spritz typically features a bitter liqueur mixed with sparkling wine and/or fizzy water or soda. In this nonalcoholic one, the saltiness and complexity of the olive brine adds depth, while the garnishes contribute visual and aromatic interest. Chill—but don't freeze—your aperitivo and tonic to keep the ice from diluting too quickly.

1½	oz. chilled nonalcoholic citrus aperitivo (such as Wilderton)
¾	oz. fresh lemon juice
½	oz. olive brine
3	oz. chilled tonic water
	Olives, thyme sprig, and lemon twist (for serving; optional)

Combine aperitivo, lemon juice, and olive brine in a collins glass. Fill with ice, top with tonic water, and stir twice. Garnish with olives, thyme sprig, and lemon twist if desired.

FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON. PROP STYLING BY ANDREA BONIN.



MIX A BETTER NA COCKTAIL AT HOME

Incorporate Botanicals and Teas

"Your best bet with NA drinks at home is to add flavor before you add ice," suggests Charles Joly, bar director and partner at Riff Raff Club in New York. Finishing your drink with botanicals like nonalcoholic lavender bitters can add lift and elegance. On the other end of the spectrum, Joly suggests stocking up on smoky lapsang souchong tea, which can mimic whiskey's boldness.

Stir With Discretion

Shaking or stirring too aggressively will further dilute a drink that is already mostly water. "With no alcohol in the drink, you're not looking to dilute," O'Malley explains, "so shake or stir lightly—just enough to chill your drink." A light touch can make all the difference, preserving the structure and flavors without muting them with ice melt.

Turn to the Italians

Spritzes and Negronis—cocktail styles that balance acidity, bitterness, and sweetness—are the perfect jumping-off point, says Jessica King, co-owner of Brother Wolf in Knoxville, Tennessee. Simple to execute, they deliver complexity with little effort. Using an NA spirit in place of the traditional gin or an NA bitter instead of amaro allows you to explore NA products through a familiar lens—just remember to tweak for intensity and flavor.

Garnish as Flair

Thoughtful details like citrus peels or fresh herbs make a statement and elevate any pour, adding to the entire aromatic experience. Taking cues from the kitchen, a touch of salt adds body and texture while also enhancing other flavors in the drink. For O'Malley, "it's about trusting your palate. Don't get too tied to traditional recipes—experiment and adjust until the balance is just right."

ONE AND DONE

SMART, IMPRESSIVE WEEKNIGHT MEALS THAT COME TOGETHER IN A SINGLE PAN

BY
JESSE SZEWCZYK

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
TRAVIS RAINEY

Nothing melts away the stress of a long day like turning on some music, pouring a glass of wine, and getting busy with dinner. But conquering a mountain of dirty dishes afterward… not so much. That's why I launched One and Done, a monthly recipe series on bonappetit.com featuring weeknight meals that can be made entirely in one pan. Combining heavy-hitting ingredients and clever cooking techniques, these recipes harness the potential of a single skillet, sheet pan, or even your rice cooker to deliver dishes as streamlined as they are brag-worthy. Think spiced chicken thighs roasted atop a bed of couscous and veggies to soak up all the flavorful schmaltz. Or cheesy rigatoni that bakes to al dente perfection right in the oven without ever having to boil a giant pot of water. These are smart, modern, comforting dinners that allow you to spend your precious time in the kitchen doing the thing you love most: cooking.

FOOD STYLING BY
MICHELLE GATTON

PROP STYLING BY
GERRI K. WILLIAMS

RUFFLED MUSHROOM POT PIE

P. 48

A quality **CAST-IRON SKILLET** can cook pretty much anything. I gravitate toward heavy preseasoned models that are made with cast iron through and through—no fancy wooden handles or adornments to get in the way or warp over time. My go-to is Lodge's 10.25" preseasoned skillet. I've had mine for years and it's only getting better. Some say soap is the enemy of cast iron, but I use some every time I clean it and it's as nonstick as ever. *$25; lodgecastiron.com*

SHORTCUT BAKED RIGATONI WITH SPICY ITALIAN SAUSAGE
P. 48

Staub's sturdy 13x9.5" **CERAMIC BAKING DISH** is ideal for everything from baked pastas to casseroles to oven braises. Its hefty construction ensures heat is distributed evenly along bottom and sides—crispy edges for everyone—and it's deep enough to accommodate even the sauciest of dishes without overflowing. Oh, and did we mention it's dishwasher-safe? *$80; zwilling.com*

My favorite **DUTCH OVEN** is the Le Creuset 5.5-qt. enameled model—it's a classic for a reason. It can go from hard-searing chicken thighs on the stovetop to gently cooking couscous in the oven with ease, boasting consistent heat and no worry of scorching. And a tight-fitting lid ensures moisture stays inside, resulting in delicately cooked grains and consistent braises. *$420; lecreuset.com*

CHICKEN THIGHS WITH SPICED COUSCOUS AND CARROTS
P. 48

The key to the best **SHEET-PAN** dinner is, unsurprisingly, a proper sheet pan. Not a flimsy jelly roll pan or that oddly shaped roaster that came with your oven but a proper 18x13" rimmed baking sheet. Nordic Ware's conducts heat evenly and quickly, making it ideal for crisping up potatoes, sausage crumbles, or chewy rice cakes. Plus, it's deep enough to contain all the sauces and marinades that take meals like these to the next level. *$30 for 2; amazon.com*

SHEET-PAN SALMON WITH RICE CAKES AND KIMCHI
P. 49

RICE COOKER RISOTTO
P. 49

Made in Japan
START
REHEAT
JIRUSHI
NL-AAC10

Japanese brand Zojirushi makes the best **RICE COOKERS** around. They reliably produce grains that are tender yet toothsome and perfectly defined, turning a simple side of rice into something special. My preferred model is the NL-AAC10 Micom rice cooker. It's low-profile but handily produces enough rice for a small crowd. And it can be used for so much more than plain rice—I use mine for everything from porridge to a hands-off risotto. *$200; zojirushi.com*

MEET YOUR NEW FAVORITE ONE-PAN DINNERS

RUFFLED MUSHROOM POT PIE

4–6 SERVINGS

This pot pie swaps out the pastry crust for ruffles of crinkled phyllo pastry that brown in the oven to create a dramatic and delicious crisp topper. The mushroom filling, with flavors reminiscent of a classic pot pie, is perked up with Dijon mustard, garlic, and fresh thyme, making for a super-savory and extremely comforting dish.

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1½ lb. mixed mushrooms (such as crimini, portobello, shiitake, and/or oyster), cut or torn into 1" pieces
1 large Yukon Gold potato (about 8 oz.), peeled, cut into ½" pieces
2 medium shallots, finely chopped
1 medium carrot, peeled, cut into ¼" pieces
1 celery stalk, finely chopped
6 garlic cloves, finely grated
3 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
1 Tbsp. finely chopped thyme
2½ cups low-sodium vegetable broth
½ cup heavy cream
1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
1 tsp. freshly ground pepper, plus more
6 sheets fresh phyllo pastry or frozen, thawed
2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
1 Tbsp. sesame seeds

Place a rack in middle of oven; preheat to 375°. Heat oil in a 10"–12"-diameter cast-iron skillet over medium. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring often, until their liquid releases, then evaporates and mushrooms are browned, 16–20 minutes. (Pan will be very full at first, but don't worry, mushrooms will shrink as they cook.) Add potato, shallots, carrot, and celery and cook, stirring often, until potato is starting to get tender but has taken on very little color and shallots are softened, 8–12 minutes.

Add garlic, flour, and thyme and stir until no pockets of dry flour remain. Stirring constantly, gradually pour in broth; bring to a simmer and cook until thick enough to barely coat a spoon, about 2 minutes. Stir in cream, Dijon mustard, 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and 1 tsp. pepper. Return to a simmer, then remove from heat. Taste filling and season with more salt and pepper if needed.

Lay 1 sheet phyllo pastry over filling to cover, tucking any overhang into pan. Working with 1 sheet at a time, loosely scrunch up remaining sheets and arrange on top organically until you've covered the entire surface (try to position so they have some height and be careful not to scrunch up the pastry too tightly as that can result in a dense, undercooked crust). Drizzle butter over, then sprinkle with sesame seeds. Transfer pan to oven and bake pot pie until phyllo is deep golden brown, 30–40 minutes.

SHORTCUT BAKED RIGATONI WITH SPICY ITALIAN SAUSAGE

6–8 SERVINGS

Unlike most baked pastas, this one doesn't require you to pre-boil the pasta. Starting with an overabundance of sauce means the pasta can absorb all of the excess liquid while baking, yielding a perfectly al dente texture and delightfully thick sauce. So don't be nervous if the dish feels excessively saucy before it goes into the oven. Also, make sure to use canned crushed tomatoes instead of canned whole ones as they will produce a sauce with just the right amount of clinginess.

10 garlic cloves, finely grated
4 large sprigs basil, plus leaves for serving
2 28-oz. cans crushed tomatoes
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces
1 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 Tbsp. Morton kosher salt
1 tsp. sugar
½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
12 oz. hot Italian sausage, casings removed if needed
1 lb. rigatoni
1 lb. low-moisture mozzarella, coarsely grated (about 3 cups)

Place a rack in middle of oven; preheat to 350°. Combine garlic, basil sprigs, crushed tomatoes, butter, salt, sugar, and red pepper flakes in a 13x9" baking dish. Add sausage, breaking up into about 1" pieces, and mix well to coat sausage. Bake, uncovered, 45 minutes (butter should be melted and sauce should be bubbling around the sides).

Add rigatoni and 1 cup water and mix to combine. Carefully cover baking dish tightly with foil; bake until pasta is very al dente, 23–27 minutes. Remove from oven, uncover, and stir well.

Heat broiler. Evenly top pasta with mozzarella and broil until cheese is melted and browned, 5–8 minutes. (Keep a close eye on the cheese as it can go from browned to burnt very quickly.) Remove baked rigatoni from broiler and top with basil leaves to serve.

CHICKEN THIGHS WITH SPICED COUSCOUS AND CARROTS

4–6 SERVINGS

The key to making this dish a one-pot affair is hitting the right ratio of water to couscous. We figured out the ideal amounts so that the couscous will finish cooking at the same time as the chicken, ensuring everything comes out perfectly done. Avoid dark purple carrots as they will turn the couscous a dull brown hue; stick to orange varieties here.

2 Tbsp. smoked paprika
1 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. ground coriander
2 tsp. ground cumin
1½ tsp. freshly ground pepper
½ tsp. ground cinnamon
2 lb. skin-on, bone-in chicken thighs (4–6), patted dry
2 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¾ tsp. plus 1 Tbsp. Morton kosher salt, divided
3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
8 garlic cloves, finely grated
2 Tbsp. tomato paste
1 lb. medium carrots, peeled, halved lengthwise, cut into ¼"-thick half-moons
1¾ cups pearl couscous
1 cup dried apricots, each cut into 2–3 strips
2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
Thinly sliced red onion, parsley leaves with tender stems, and chopped salted roasted pistachios (for serving; optional)

Place a rack in middle of oven; preheat to 375°. Mix paprika, coriander, cumin, black pepper, and cinnamon in a small bowl to combine. Sprinkle both sides of chicken thighs with 1 Tbsp. Diamond Crystal or 1¾ tsp. Morton kosher salt, then sprinkle with about one third of spice mix. (It's okay to eyeball it.) Set remaining spice mix aside.

Drizzle oil into a cold medium Dutch oven or other heavy pot, then arrange chicken, skin side down, in pot. Set over medium-high heat and cook, undisturbed and rotating pot on burner for even browning, until skin is deep golden brown and chicken releases easily from pot, 10–15 minutes. Transfer chicken to a large plate or baking sheet and arrange skin side up.

Cook onion in same pot, stirring often, until softened and starting to brown around the edges, about 5 minutes. Add red pepper flakes and reserved spice mix and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add garlic and tomato paste and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add carrots, couscous, apricots, lemon juice, remaining 1 Tbsp. plus 2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1 Tbsp. Morton kosher salt, and 2⅓ cups water. Bring to a simmer, then remove pot from heat.

Nestle chicken, skin side up, into couscous mixture; cover and bake 15 minutes. Uncover and continue to bake until chicken skin is crisp again and liquid is absorbed, 30–35 minutes. Remove pot from oven and top chicken and couscous with red onion, parsley, and pistachios just before serving if desired.

DO AHEAD: Chicken thighs and couscous (without red onion, parsley, and pistachios) can be made 2 days ahead. Cover and chill. Reheat, covered, in a 375° oven until warmed through.

SHEET-PAN SALMON WITH RICE CAKES AND KIMCHI

4 SERVINGS

Cooking Korean rice cakes in the oven might be unexpected, but the technique yields a perfectly chewy, toothsome texture with low effort. When shopping for your Korean rice cakes, look for cylindrical ones in lieu of the flatter disk-shaped cakes. The latter tend to bake unevenly and burn in the oven. If salmon isn't your thing, feel free to swap in any large piece of mild flaky white fish of your choice; cod or halibut would both work great here.

8 garlic cloves, finely grated
1½ lb. cylindrical Korean rice cakes (about 2½" long), thawed if frozen
1 16–24-oz. jar Napa cabbage kimchi
½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
4 Tbsp. oyster sauce, divided
3 Tbsp. toasted sesame oil, divided
2 Tbsp. vegetable oil, divided, plus more for drizzling
1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, divided, plus more
12 oz. baby bok choy, cored, cut into quarters through root ends, eighths if large
1 1½–2-lb. piece skinless center-cut salmon fillet
3 large scallions

Place a rack in bottom third of oven; preheat to 400°. Toss garlic, rice cakes, kimchi, red pepper flakes, 3 Tbsp. oyster sauce, 2 Tbsp. sesame oil, 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil, and ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt on a rimmed baking sheet until combined and evenly coated. Bake, tossing halfway through, until rice cakes are tender, 25–30 minutes.

Meanwhile, toss bok choy, 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil, ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, remaining 1 Tbsp. oyster sauce, and remaining 1 Tbsp. sesame oil in a medium bowl to combine.

Pour ½ cup water onto baking sheet with rice cake mixture and toss mixture to create a saucy consistency. Scatter bok choy mixture evenly over, then arrange salmon fillet in the center. Drizzle with vegetable oil and season generously with salt. Bake until salmon is opaque in the center and flakes easily with a fork and bok choy is tender, 16–20 minutes.

Meanwhile, cut scallions crosswise into 3"–4" pieces. Cut each piece in half lengthwise, then cut each piece in half again, or thirds if thicker, to create matchsticks. (If any scallions are particularly large, you can cut in half again. The aim is to make all of the pieces similar in size.) Place scallions in a large bowl of ice water and let sit 10 minutes. Drain and pat dry. (Alternatively, you can simply thinly slice the scallions and skip the soaking.)

Remove baking sheet from oven; scatter scallions over salmon and rice cakes.

RICE COOKER RISOTTO

4 SERVINGS

Most risottos are far from weeknight-friendly, requiring upward of an hour of stirring, babying the grains until they are cooked just right. This version turns the dish into a hands-off dinner that practically makes itself. To achieve the perfect texture, you might need to adjust the finished risotto with more vegetable broth to loosen it up. You want it to be firm enough to stay on a plate when tilted but loose enough to comfortably settle into a flat layer when spooned. Stir in ¼-cupfuls of broth at a time until you get there.

2 medium shallots, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, finely grated
1½ cups arborio rice
½ cup dry white wine
3–4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth, divided
8 Tbsp. (1 stick) unsalted butter, divided
1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
½ tsp. freshly ground pepper, plus more
Zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 cup frozen peas
2 oz. Parmesan, finely grated (about 1 cup); plus more for serving (optional)
Mint leaves and extra-virgin olive oil (for serving; optional)

Combine shallots, garlic, rice, wine, 2 cups broth, 4 Tbsp. butter, 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and ½ tsp. pepper in a rice cooker. Close lid and set to cook on white rice setting.

As soon as timer goes off, switch rice cooker to warm (most models will do this automatically). Open rice cooker and add lemon zest and juice, peas, 2 oz. Parmesan, 1 cup broth, and remaining 4 Tbsp. butter and stir until cheese and butter are melted and combined and mixture is creamy. Add more broth ¼-cupful at a time as needed until risotto is loosened to your desired consistency (this could be up to 1 cup more). Season with pepper and more salt if needed.

Divide risotto among bowls and top with mint and more Parmesan and drizzle with oil if desired.

Scan the QR code to access these and lots more one-pan weeknight recipes. Warning: Your dish gloves might start to feel a little...left out.

1
RESTAURANT
2
COUNTRIES
3
GENERATIONS

From Lima to Los Angeles, the family behind Chifa finds reverence and inspiration in Lunar New Year gatherings

* * *

By
Elyse Inamine

Photographs by
Lenne Chai

* * *

Food Styling by
Maya Bookbinder

Prop Styling by
Samantha Margherita

* * *

OPPOSITE: A feast featuring black pepper lobster, si yao chicken, steamed whole turbot, wild mushrooms and fat choy, sticky rice, bean curd with pork hock, and sweet sesame balls

On the eve of Chinese New Year, for some families it is tradition to return to the matriarch's home for a feast. When hospitality runs in your blood, as it does for the Leons, that means everyone reunites at Chifa, their Chino Latino restaurant in Los Angeles. It has become the beating heart of their lives—a story that began with one woman 50 years ago in Lima, Peru.

The South American term *chifa* encompasses both a style of cuisine and restaurant introduced by Chinese immigrants, fusing Cantonese and Peruvian flavors. It's also the name of Wendy Leon's first restaurant, established in 1975 with her Chinese Peruvian husband, Ricardo José Leon. Chifa (1.0, we'll call it) looked wholly unique compared to its neighboring counterparts in Lima at the time, adorned with traditional Chinese vegetable paintings, big round Formica tables, and a custom-built arched entrance, a nod to Chinese architecture.

"I cooked my home specialty, and that's why people came to eat," Wendy remembers fondly.

This included dishes from Tongshan in China's Hubei Province, north of Guangdong, such as chickens poached in an inky mother soy sauce and spareribs tossed in a garlic-ginger glaze.

Business boomed at Chifa 1.0. Customers called ahead to make reservations without seeing the menu. But after a couple years, an opportunity arose for Wendy and Ricardo to immigrate to America with their three children, Ricardina, Josefina, and Humberto. The offer was too good to pass up, so they left the restaurant and Lima behind in 1977, with $3,000 to their name.

The Leon family relocated to Los Angeles, where Ricardo managed Chinese American restaurants while Wendy worked in garment factories and cafeterias. At home, their children devoured Wendy's Tongshan specialities, along with Peruvian ceviches, alfajores, lomo saltado, and wok-fried Cantonese dishes she'd learned from her parents and grandmother.

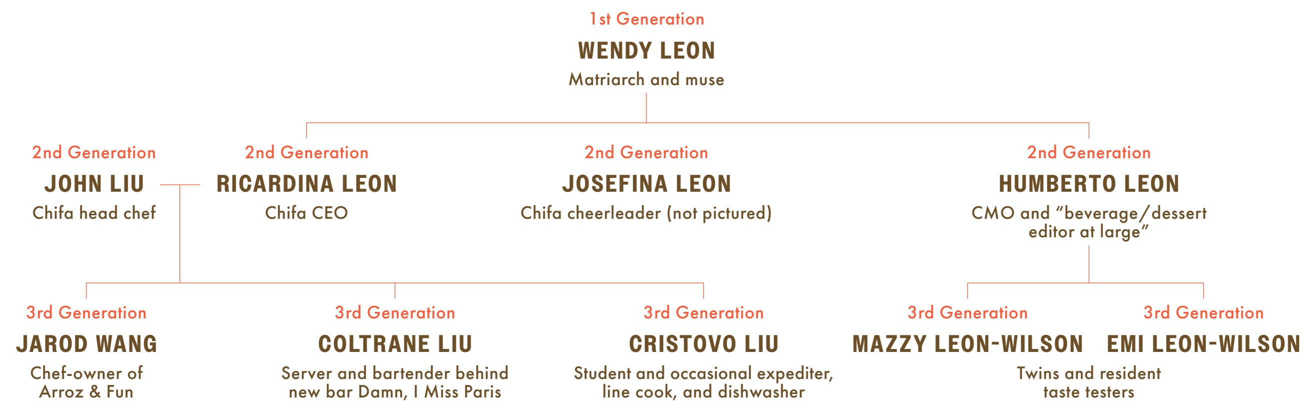
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Wendy Leon in prep mode; red dates, signifying luck for the year to come; John Liu garnishing black pepper lobster and yi mein with scallions

Over the next decade the Leon family expanded and the kids moved out and away, yet food continued to anchor them in their many boisterous reunions. Humberto went on to found cult fashion brand Opening Ceremony in New York. Ricardina met her husband, John Liu, while working at an investment firm, and after they got married, John became the family cook. He watched Wendy in the kitchen during big gatherings, taking notes in his journal. Eventually, John and Wendy joined forces, prepping the feasts together. They even took these meals on the road. While Humberto helmed high-fashion brand Kenzo as creative director, he longed for food from his childhood. So he invited his whole family to cook for his colleagues. They took over restaurants in Paris and Tokyo and fired up Chinese Peruvian banquets, all executed by Wendy and John.

The duo catered a particularly pivotal event in 2017—a Kenzo film premiere with a thousand guests. After crushing another dinner service, it suddenly dawned on John: What he and Wendy were doing felt a lot like running a restaurant.

The next year Ricardina, John, and Humberto decided to revive Wendy's old restaurant. Chifa 2.0 would serve Wendy's Tongshan, Cantonese, and Chinese Peruvian dishes alongside the Taiwanese classics John grew up savoring, all against the backdrop of Humberto's whimsical design aesthetic. Ricardina, who has a real estate background, began looking into spaces.

THE CHIFA FAMILY TREE



1st Generation
WENDY LEON
Matriarch and muse

2nd Generation
JOHN LIU
Chifa head chef

2nd Generation
RICARDINA LEON
Chifa CEO

2nd Generation
JOSEFINA LEON
Chifa cheerleader (not pictured)

2nd Generation
HUMBERTO LEON
CMO and "beverage/dessert editor at large"

3rd Generation
JAROD WANG
Chef-owner of Arroz & Fun

3rd Generation
COLTRANE LIU
Server and bartender behind new bar Damn, I Miss Paris

3rd Generation
CRISTOVO LIU
Student and occasional expediter, line cook, and dishwasher

3rd Generation
MAZZY LEON-WILSON

3rd Generation
EMI LEON-WILSON

Twins and resident taste testers

LEFT: A cream puff tower symbolizing happiness and prosperity, infused with tangy Mandarin orange made by Stephanie Fong of Go Cakes

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But when they shared the news with Wendy, the Leon matriarch didn't mince her words. Running a restaurant was hard work, she warned: "I could not wish this on my worst enemy."

The trio pursued their plan anyway, powered by an almost existential preoccupation of what might happen if they didn't keep cooking. "We realized, Wow, in one generation we could lose our cultural food," Ricardina says. "That's why we did [this], to keep our culture alive."

Chifa 2.0 opened in November 2020, and it was all hands on deck. John and Wendy spearheaded the menu. Ricardina and Humberto took orders and ferried dishes to guests. John and Ricardina's children—Jarod (27 years old), Coltrane (22), and Cristovo (21)—hopped on the line, bussed tables, and began to understand their family's history in a new light.

Today Chifa is a little over four years old, and all three generations of Leons are involved in some way.

Wendy is always on soup duty, letting the weather dictate what she's making: pork ribs and lily flowers on cold winter days, chicken broth with walnuts and Chinese almonds in the spring. John is on the line, while Ricardina handles operations. Aside from design, Humberto also plans events for the restaurant. (Josefina is a regular and overall cheerleader.) The grandchildren have stepped into leadership roles of their own, working at sister restaurant Arroz & Fun and new cocktail bar Damn, I Miss Paris. And while they may see each other often, rarely does that happen when everyone is off the clock.

That's why events like Chinese New Year are essential. It's one of the few instances when everyone is free, but it's also an opportunity to honor where everything started for this growing restaurant family: Wendy's cooking. Hosting these huge annual dinner parties also doubles as Chifa menu R&D. "You get to test out what a hundred people think," Humberto says. "And the good thing about cooking for family is that they will not hold back."

BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Rinsed yi mein noodles, signifying long life; chopsticks in custom colorways available for sale at Chifa; Coltrane Liu arranging flowers

A week out from the holiday, Wendy and John begin mapping out the menu, brainstorming 10 or so dishes. They'll inevitably add five more dishes inspired by the ingredients they encounter at the market. On the day of, "we invite everyone in a very Latin Chinese way," Ricardina says, laughing. That means 50 to 60 family members, neighbors, Chifa employees, friends, and friends of friends are all welcome. Everyone pitches in, with the kids making dumplings and Humberto bringing dessert, such as sesame tong yuan or sweet red bean soup. Money-filled red envelopes, lai see, are exchanged, and one table is set aside for mah-jongg, where you'll often hear Ricardina yelping in victory.

The long buffet table teems with plates of long noodles for longevity, steamed whole fish for prosperity, Wendy's braised chicken and lomo saltado, and John's whims, which could be beet lo bak go (turnip cakes) or his three-day Taiwanese beef noodle soup. Wendy saves the fish cheeks, the most tender and prized part, for her grandchildren.

Looking around, the Leon matriarch is quietly pleased. While she was initially against Chifa 2.0, she sees how it isn't an exact replica of her first venture, but rather a continuation of what she started: broadening the borders of Chinese food to reflect the family's lived experiences. It is a reminder of the sweetness of reunion and of what she has built—a legacy from Lima to Los Angeles.

"I'm so proud," Wendy says. "My family, John's family. We put it all together."

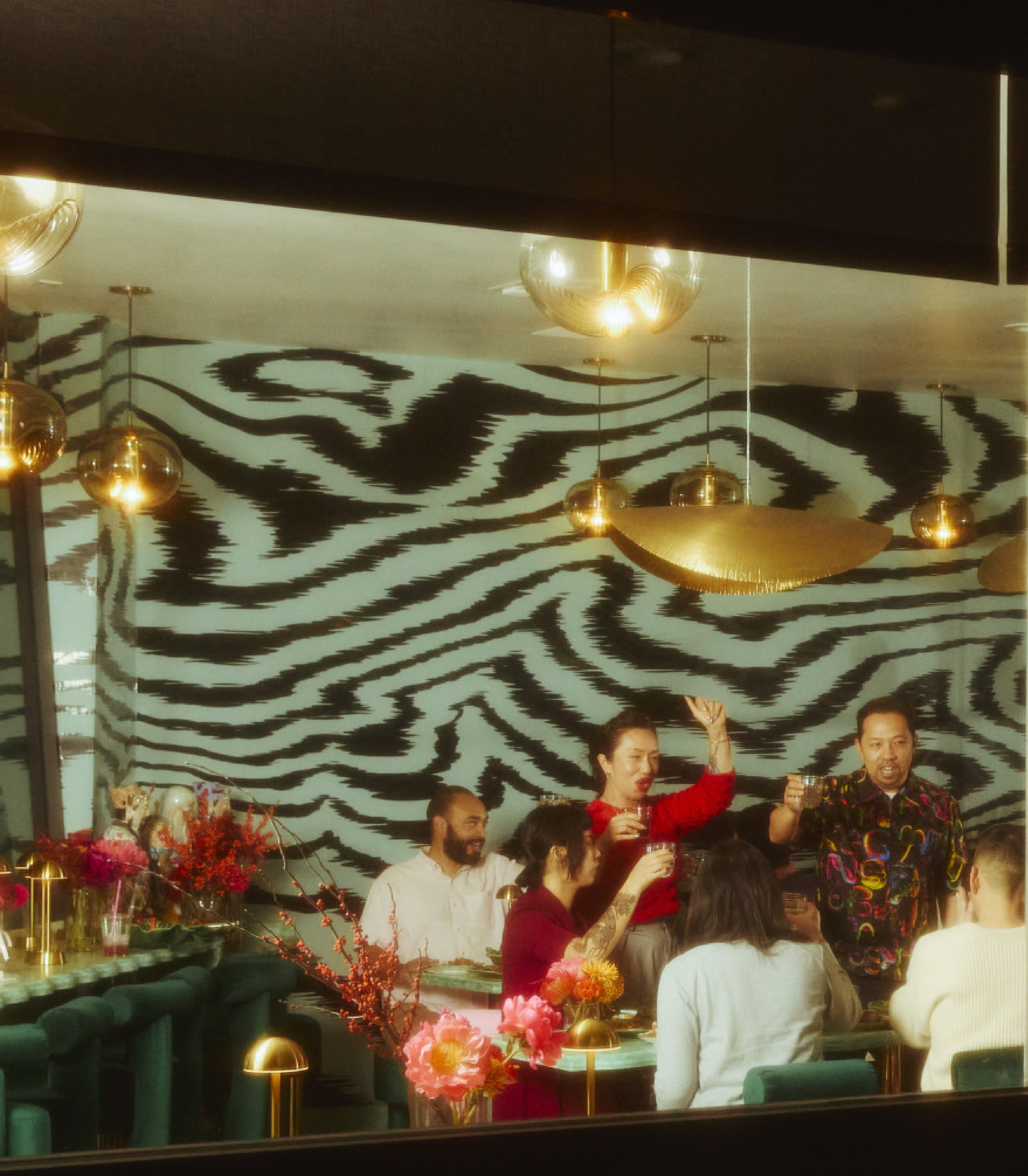
PROOF ONLY

CHIFA KUOK WAI

HOW CHIFA BLOSSOMED IN PERU

Between 1840 and 1900, thousands of Cantonese men left harsh conditions in their homeland to work on sugarcane plantations in Peru. Many married locals, started families, and opened Chinese restaurants, known as chifa, in Lima's Barrio Chino in the 1920s, blending Chinese techniques with local ingredients to create dishes that have become emblematic of Peruvian cuisine. Think lomo saltado (Peru's soy-sauce-spiked answer to steak frites) and arroz chaufa (fried rice). The Leons opened their version in 1975.

LEFT: Mah-jongg queen Ricardina Leon, owning the table. OPPOSITE: Wendy Leon doling out fish cheeks to her grandkids



Chifa's dining room, awash in shades of lucky jade, including custom "heartwood" wallpaper designed by Humberto Leon for Calico Wallpaper

“THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF CHINESE NEW YEAR IS BEING CONNECTED WITH YOUR FAMILY. WHAT’S NICE IS THAT THE RESTAURANT DOES THAT FOR US TOO.” —*CRISTOVO LIU*

Happy Fridge Salad

RECIPE BY
HANA ASBRINK

PHOTOGRAPH BY
ELLIOTT JEROME
BROWN JR.

FOOD STYLING BY
EMILIE FOSNOCHT

PROP STYLING BY
CHRISTINA ALLEN

What's a happy fridge salad? One that gets better the longer it sits in the fridge. Store-bought broccoli slaw keeps its crunch as it marinates in a citrusy dressing, and canned chickpeas grow delightfully plump. You can have it with a slab of buttered bread, roll it into a wrap, or top it with a fried egg and a dash of hot sauce. Or just enjoy it on its own. Either way, say goodbye to sad desk lunches.

4 SERVINGS

The bright and balanced dressing on this salad is more than just a vehicle for flavor; it transforms the texture of the salad as well. The citrus juice and sherry vinegar work hard to tenderize the hearty kale and crunchy broccoli slaw as they sit in the fridge. Store-bought broccoli slaw, a confetti of shredded broccoli stalks, carrots, and sometimes cabbage, is a handy staple for salads and stir-fries alike. Canned chickpeas bring added protein, and mild pickled Peppadew peppers are an unexpected burst of color and sweet tang.

1 bunch Tuscan kale, ribs and stems removed, leaves thinly sliced
2 15.5-oz. cans chickpeas, rinsed
2 cups store-bought broccoli slaw
½ cup drained Peppadew peppers in brine, coarsely chopped
3 garlic cloves
1 oz. Parmesan, finely grated (about ½ cup)
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup fresh citrus juice (lemon, lime, and/or orange)
2 Tbsp. sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
2 tsp. Dijon mustard
2 tsp. honey
1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
¼ tsp. freshly ground pepper, plus more

Place kale, chickpeas, slaw, and Peppadew peppers in a large bowl; set salad aside.

Finely grate garlic into a measuring glass. Add Parmesan, oil, citrus juice, vinegar, Dijon mustard, honey, 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, and ¼ tsp. black pepper and whisk until emulsified. (Or, place in a small jar, then cover and shake to combine.)

Drizzle vinaigrette over reserved salad. Using tongs, toss vigorously to combine. Taste and season with more salt and black pepper if needed.

DO AHEAD: Salad can be made 3 days ahead. Cover and chill.

Cheese COURSE

BY CHRIS MOROCCO

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HEAMI LEE

The “Beef. It’s What’s for Dinner” commercial from the early ’90s is seared into my mind like steak on a grill. Lately though, red meat rarely appears on my plate. My weeknight move for making satiating meals in shockingly little time is the *other* other white meat—cheese. It’s a rich source of protein that will keep you full, and it can be cooked in all sorts of ways. For anyone who wants to eat more vegetarian meals, cheese is the answer. You can certainly grate a block of cheddar over your salad, but the dairy aisle offers quite a few more options these days. Grab any variety that catches your eye and what once seemed like a side can easily turn into a hearty main. Look for salty finishers like Cotija, rich orbs of buffalo mozzarella and burrata, grill-friendly Halloumi, dense planks of paneer, and crumbly feta. Each one offers something unique, and they’ll all help you get dinner on the table as fast as a catchy commercial might have you believe.

THREE SPEEDY DINNERS THAT PROVE DAIRY IS THE MAIN DISH

FOOD STYLING BY PEARL JONES PROP STYLING BY MAGGIE DIMARCO

G. Laponte

PANEER, A FRESH CHEESE PROMINENT IN INDIA THAT SHOWS UP IN DISHES LIKE SAAG PANEER AND MATAR PANEER, has a singular texture. Refusing to melt at all costs, it holds its steak-like sliceability no matter how you cook it. But unlike other non-melty cheeses, which often lean briny, paneer's flavor is buttery and mild, a blank canvas primed to go in any direction. Paneer is the cheese I want to bread and fry like a cutlet, throw chunks of into a vegetarian stew, or marinate and grill.

A quick sear brings a lightly charred edge to paneer's otherwise cream-like flavor, making it a fantastic anchor in this recipe. Inspired by a Japanese dry curry technique, I lean hard on the aromatic warmth of curry powder, plus a splash of soy sauce and mirin to round it all out. Blistering green beans turns them delightfully shriveled and tender, a Sichuan-style method using only a little oil that can work wonders even on the ropiest out-of-season produce.

Paneer AND GREEN BEAN STIR-FRY

4 SERVINGS

¼	cup mirin (sweet Japanese rice wine)
4	tsp. soy sauce
3	Tbsp. vegetable oil, divided
1	8–12-oz. block paneer, cut into 3x½" pieces (like chunky french fries)
12	oz. green beans, trimmed, patted dry if needed
3	oz. snow peas
1½	tsp. mild curry powder
	Kosher salt (optional)

Stir mirin, soy sauce, and 2 Tbsp. water in a small bowl to combine; set sauce aside.

Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Arrange paneer in pan in a single layer and cook, turning occasionally, until golden brown all over, about 5 minutes. Transfer paneer to a plate with tongs.

Add green beans to same pan; cook, tossing occasionally and adjusting heat as needed if cooking too quickly, until blistered (but not scorched), 10–12 minutes. Add snow peas; cook, tossing often, until a shade darker and no longer squeaky-raw, 1–2 minutes.

Return paneer to pan; add curry powder and remaining 1 Tbsp. oil and cook, tossing constantly, until curry powder is evenly distributed and very fragrant, 1–2 minutes. Add reserved sauce and cook, tossing occasionally to coat, until liquid is evaporated, about 3 minutes. Taste stir-fry and season with salt if needed. Transfer to a platter to serve.

COOK'S NOTE

If you don't have mirin, you can stir 1 Tbsp. pure maple syrup into 3 Tbsp. water; it will give similar balance to the salty, charred, and aromatic flavors of the dish. Green beans are just one vegetable that can work here: Consider sugar snap peas, asparagus, or dried blanched broccoli as well.

NOT THAT LONG AGO, BURRATA WAS A NICHE CHEESE IMPORTED FROM ITALY. But the voyage it took was a race against time since the brine it traveled in often soured before the cheese could land on your plate. Today there are several domestic producers, and each container is a vacuum-sealed guarantee that you are about to tear into pure joy—a luscious globe of mozzarella filled with cream. Honestly, it's so good that making a recipe with burrata almost feels like cheating.

Sure, you could serve it on a pile of balsamic-dressed arugula, but burrata's intense richness means it can stand up to intense flavors. Something spicy, like Sichuan chili crisp or Calabrian chile paste, is my go-to for cutting through the creaminess. Sturdier greens are also welcome here: Napa cabbage and escarole are two favorites, but you also can't go wrong with a baking sheet of roasted veg. Whatever you serve it on, forget about neat slices; just tear into it and let it transform whatever awaits.

CABBAGE AND *Burrata* SALAD WITH SPICY TAHINI

COOK'S NOTE

Two unexpected ingredients are at work in this dressing. Toasted sesame oil amplifies the tahini's sesame flavor, while onion powder, a stealthy flavor enhancer similar to MSG, brings umami power. Onion powder works in all kinds of creamy dressings and won't make things taste like raw onion, but rather will bring the enhancing depth of earthy-sweet roasted alliums.

4 SERVINGS

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup unseasoned rice vinegar
¼ cup well-stirred tahini
2 Tbsp. Calabrian chile paste (such as TuttoCalabria)
2 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. onion powder
1 tsp. toasted sesame oil
Kosher salt
½ medium head of Napa cabbage, leaves separated, chopped or torn into large pieces (about 16 cups)
2 Persian cucumbers, scrubbed, thinly sliced
1 8-oz. ball burrata or buffalo mozzarella
2 scallions, thinly sliced
Toasted sesame seeds (for serving)

Whisk olive oil, vinegar, tahini, chile paste, sugar, onion powder, and sesame oil in a medium bowl. Season dressing with salt.

Place cabbage and half of dressing in a large bowl. Using your hands or tongs, work dressing into cabbage until every leaf is coated. Taste and add more dressing and/or season with more salt as needed. Add cucumbers and toss to combine.

Arrange salad in a large shallow bowl or on a platter. Break burrata in half directly over salad (it has a very soft center and will go everywhere once opened), then top with scallions and sesame seeds.

I REALIZED AWHILE AGO THAT MY KIDS DON'T REALLY CARE WHAT MEAT GOES INTO THEIR MEATBALLS. It's more the *idea* of a meatball as a savory dumpling alongside (but not touching!) their pasta that draws them in. So it actually caused less of a stir than anticipated when I informed them that, in fact, I had put cheese but not meat in their dinner.

The thing is, Halloumi isn't like any other cheese. It is pungent, briny, and intense, with a bouncy density. These are exactly the qualities that allow it to be a knockout substitute for ground meat. In this recipe, you shred Halloumi on a box grater, then call in all the usual suspects—breadcrumbs, eggs, and spices. The issue with many meatless swaps is they want to fall apart, as they lack the binding ability of meat proteins to create firm structure once cooked. But Halloumi can do it all. The meatballs stay intact as they swim in an aromatic tomato sauce and are served up to discerning eaters of any age.

Halloumi NO-MEAT BALLS

4 SERVINGS

NO-MEAT BALLS

1 small onion, coarsely grated
2 large eggs, lightly beaten to blend
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more
1½ cups panko
1 8-oz. block Halloumi cheese, coarsely grated
1 tsp. garlic powder
1 tsp. smoked paprika
½ tsp. mild red pepper flakes or ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
Freshly ground pepper

SAUCE AND ASSEMBLY

3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
2 3" cinnamon sticks
4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 24-oz. bottle passata (tomato purée)
Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
Cilantro leaves with tender stems and country-style bread or steamed rice (for serving)

NO-MEAT BALLS Place a rack in middle of oven; preheat to 400°. Mix onion, eggs, ¼ cup oil, and ¼ cup water in a medium bowl to combine, then mix in panko and let sit 10 minutes to hydrate.

Mix in Halloumi, garlic powder, paprika, and red pepper flakes; season with black pepper. (You don't need salt as the Halloumi tends to be very salty.) Working one at a time, scoop out 3-Tbsp. portions and gently roll between lightly oiled hands to form into balls (you should have about 12 total).

Arrange no-meat balls on a large rimmed baking sheet, spacing evenly apart; drizzle each with a little oil. Bake until well browned underneath and lightly golden on top, 18–22 minutes. Let cool slightly.

SAUCE AND ASSEMBLY While the no-meat balls are baking, heat oil in a large saucepan or medium skillet over medium. Add cinnamon sticks and garlic and cook, stirring often, until garlic is golden around the edges, about 4 minutes.

Add passata and season with salt and black pepper. Cook, reducing heat as needed if sauce is spattering, until reduced by one third and flavors have come together, 20–25 minutes. (It's important to cook out the raw flavor of the tomato first; you'll adjust for consistency after.) Stir in ¼-cupfuls of water at a time until you can pour sauce off of a spoon in a smooth, steady stream. Combine meatballs and sauce in a large shallow bowl and top with cilantro. Serve with bread alongside.

DO AHEAD: No-meat balls and sauce can be made 3 days ahead. Store together or separately in airtight containers and chill.

COOK'S NOTE

Halloumi is from Cyprus, a small island in the Mediterranean, and has protected naming status, similar to Champagne. Unlike cheeses like feta or cheddar that have innumerable styles and levels of quality, pretty much any Halloumi you find is likely to be fantastic. While you can certainly eat it straight out of the package, it is best when seared or grilled, where it takes on a lovely deep brown color.

By
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Michelle Gatton

Prop styling by
Erica Lutz

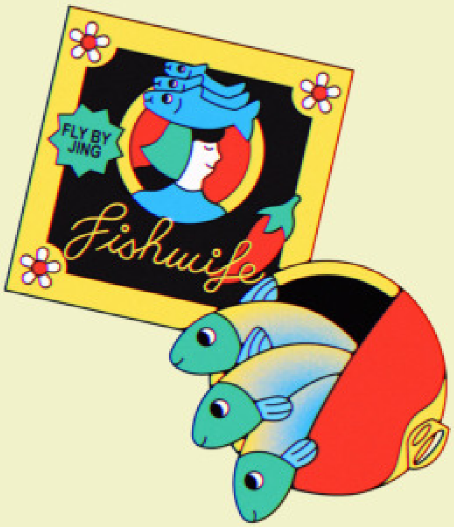
Transform modern pantry essentials into decidedly fresh meals

A SHORTCUT ABOVE

Peek into any of our staffers' kitchen cabinets and you will find a wide range of staples. Beyond basics like vinegar and soy sauce, our must-have products are all over the map, from heat-and-eat shortcut meals to flavor-packed simmer sauces. We love anything that makes dinnertime easier, and we have no problem deviating from the directions on the label either.

Consider this an opinionated guide to cooking from a test-kitchen-curated pantry, with odes to eight of our current store-bought faves. We'll tell you what makes each a must-buy, and for a few, how to stretch their potential in a new recipe. Add one of our picks to your list for your next shopping trip—and feel empowered to get creative the next time you're staring at your pantry.

FISHWIFE Smoked Salmon with FLY BY JING Sichuan Chili Crisp



Fishwife's products are high-quality and ready to eat straight from the tin, so they're perfect for piling onto a grain bowl or a slice of yogurt-slicked toast. In this collaboration with Sichuan condiment company Fly by Jing, the brand's flaky smoked salmon is coated in spicy, tingly chili crisp. Served over rice topped with sliced scallions, it's the lightning-fast work-from-home lunch of my dreams. If you're in the mood to get a little more hands-on, use the salmon (tossed with mayo for good measure) in a loaded hand roll with cucumber and avocado.

SPICY SALMON HAND ROLLS
P. 84

PORK AND TOMATILLO UDON P. 84

SABOR MEXICANO

Medium Homemade Salsa Verde

HOME
MADE
SALSA VERDE

Boasting a simple ingredient list led by fire-roasted tomatillos, Sabor Mexicano's salsa verde is bright, punchy, and vegetal—with none of that "came from a jar" flavor. While you can and should eat it straight with a bag of tortilla chips, it also makes a great addition to an enchilada filling, a pan of chilaquiles, or (twist!) a savory sauce to coat chewy udon noodles and tender ground pork.

RAO'S HOMEMADE

Marinara Pasta Sauce

RAO'S
HOMEMADE
MARINARA

A Harlem Italian restaurant founded in 1896, Rao's is famous for two things: being hard to get into and selling what's widely regarded as the gold standard of jarred pasta sauces in supermarkets across the country. Worth its higher price point, the marinara tastes exceedingly fresh despite being shelf-stable. Of course, you can us it in any pasta dish, like a fast-track baked ziti. But if you're feeling a little extra, use it to flavor the cooking liquid for rice in a Spanish-inspired shrimp-topped one-skillet dinner.

SPANISH SHRIMP AND RICE WITH SAFFRON MAYO P. 84

TASTY BITE
ORGANIC
Channa Masala

TASTY BITE

Organic Channa Masala

Everyone has their standby heat-and-eat meal when they can't possibly dream of cooking. Tasty Bite's chana masala pouches are mine. These microwavable bundles are deeply spiced and perfectly balanced—so much so that food director Chris Morocco couldn't believe I hadn't added a couple extra ingredients to the mix myself. All you need is rice to complete the meal, but to level up, use the mix as a filling in calzone-like pockets made with store-bought pizza dough.

SPICED CHICKPEA AND SPINACH POCKETS P. 84

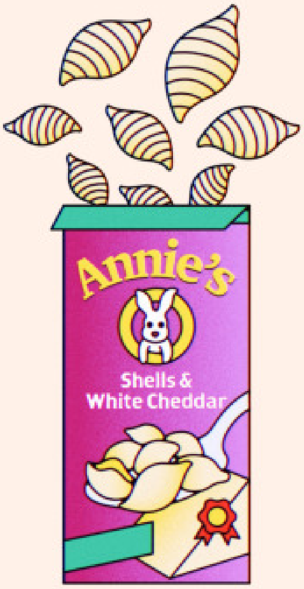
STAUB
STAUB

CREAMY CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI SOUP P. 85

ANNIE'S

HOMEGROWN

Macaroni & Cheese - Shells & White Cheddar



Though I grew up in a Kraft family, in adulthood I've become a staunch supporter of the purple box with the bunny on it. Surprisingly rich, with a good amount of tang from the white cheddar, Annie's feels more grown-up, especially if you doctor it up with a lot of black pepper and frozen peas. For a departure from the back-of-the-package instructions, turn yours into a play on chicken noodle soup; the flavor packet creates a creamy broth when whisked into chicken stock studded with carrot, celery, and broccoli.

Want more of our editors' favorite standout staples delivered straight to your door?

Scan the QR code to subscribe to the **Cook With Bon Appétit Box.** You'll get recipes, ingredients, articles, and more every month.

SPICY SALMON HAND ROLLS

MAKES 10

If you don't want to bother with the hand roll wrapping technique, swap in a pack of seasoned seaweed snacks for the plain nori sheets and build bites right in your hand by piling everything on top of the crisp pieces of seaweed, then fold and eat like a taco.

5 square toasted nori sheets
1 3.2–4-oz. can spicy salmon or tuna (such as Fishwife)
¼ cup mayonnaise
Cooked sushi rice (for filling)
1 avocado, thinly sliced
½ medium cucumber, cut into matchsticks
Gochugaru (coarse Korean red pepper powder) or other mild red pepper flakes (for serving)

Cut each nori sheet in half to make 10 rectangles. Place salmon in a medium bowl, reserving any oil in can. Stir in mayonnaise and 1 Tbsp. reserved oil with a fork, breaking up and coating salmon.

Working one at a time, set nori sheets, shiny side down, on a surface with a long side facing you. Place a spoonful of rice on left side of nori; spread evenly into a square to fill the left third of sheet. Top rice with a small spoonful of dressed salmon, then a few avocado slices and cucumber pieces, arranging in a diagonal line that points up to the upper left corner of nori. Fold bottom left corner of nori up and over fillings, then continue to roll up to form a cone. Pat edge with a bit of water and gently press to seal. Sprinkle exposed filling with gochugaru.

COOK THE COVER

PORK AND TOMATILLO UDON

4 SERVINGS

Fresh or dried udon works in this recipe—as does nearly any noodle you might have on hand. If you are after the exemplary chewiness of fresh udon, look for packages in the refrigerated or freezer section at the market. Many versions come with soup bases or flavor packets; just save them for another use.

1 lb. fresh udon or 8 oz. dried udon
1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 lb. ground pork
½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt
3 Tbsp. hoisin sauce
1¼ cups store-bought tomatillo salsa (such as Sabor Mexicano)
2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
⅔ cup chopped cilantro, plus leaves with tender stems for serving
Thinly sliced radishes (for serving)

Cook udon according to package directions; drain and set aside.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add pork and salt; cook, breaking up meat into smaller pieces with a wooden spoon, until mostly cooked through, about 3 minutes. Add hoisin sauce and cook until meat is coated and caramelized, about 2 minutes. Add salsa and cook, stirring, until combined and heated through, about 1 minute. Add butter and reserved udon and cook, tossing to combine, about 1 minute. Remove from heat and mix in chopped cilantro.

Divide udon among shallow bowls and top with radishes and cilantro leaves.

SPANISH SHRIMP AND RICE WITH SAFFRON MAYO

4 SERVINGS

Short-grain rice—like bomba, arborio, or carnaroli—is key here; it maintains a bit of texture as it cooks and doesn't break or turn to mush in the pan like jasmine or other long-grain rice might.

1 cup bomba, arborio, or carnaroli rice
1 lb. shrimp, peeled, tails left on, deveined, patted dry
1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
Freshly ground pepper
½ cup store-bought marinara sauce (such as Rao's or Mutti)
2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
½ cup coarsely chopped roasted red peppers from a jar
1 tsp. ground cumin
2 pinches of saffron threads, divided
¼ cup sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
½ cup mayonnaise
Sliced Peppadew peppers in brine and chopped parsley (for serving)

Place rice in a colander and rinse under running water until water runs mostly clear; set aside. Season shrimp with salt and pepper; set aside. Stir marinara sauce and 2½ cups water in a large measuring glass to combine; set aside.

Heat oil in a medium high-sided skillet over medium-high. Add garlic and roasted red peppers; cook, stirring often, until slightly softened and garlic is fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add cumin and 1 pinch of saffron, crushing with your fingers. Cook, stirring constantly, until spices are fragrant, about 1 minute. Add vinegar, scraping up any browned bits stuck to bottom of pan, about 1 minute.

Add reserved rice and toss a few times to combine. Add 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton kosher salt and reserved marinara mixture; season with pepper. Increase heat to high and bring to a boil. Cover pan and reduce heat to low. Cook until rice is tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed, 15–20 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine remaining 1 pinch of saffron, crushing with your fingers, and 1 tsp. warm water in a medium bowl and let sit 20 minutes.

Uncover pan and nestle reserved shrimp into rice. Increase heat to medium and re-cover pan. Cook, turning shrimp halfway through, until cooked through, about 5 minutes. Remove pan from heat.

Stir mayonnaise and a pinch of salt into saffron mixture. Scatter Peppadew peppers and parsley over shrimp and rice. Serve with saffron mayo.

SPICED CHICKPEA AND SPINACH POCKETS

4 SERVINGS

While you could absolutely sub in frozen spinach here, you'll have to increase the greens' cook time; you want to introduce as little liquid as possible to the filling to make sure the dough cooks through, and fresh spinach cooks down quickly to a drier consistency.

3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided, plus more for baking sheet
1 10-oz. package instant chana masala (such as Tasty Bite or Maya Kaimal)
5 oz. baby spinach
1 lb. store-bought pizza dough, room temperature
All-purpose flour (for surface)
1 large egg, beaten to blend
2 tsp. sesame seeds
1 cup plain whole-milk yogurt
Kosher salt
Kashmiri or other red chile powder or paprika (for serving; optional)

Place a rack in middle of oven and preheat to 400°. Rub a rimmed baking sheet all over with oil. Place chana masala in a medium bowl. Heat 1 Tbsp. oil in a medium pot over medium-high. Add spinach and cook, stirring often, until wilted, about 3 minutes. Scrape into bowl with chana masala and stir to combine.

Divide pizza dough into 4 equal portions and place on a lightly floured surface. Working one a time, roll each portion into a 5" round. Divide spinach mixture among rounds, placing in the center of each. Fold one side of dough up and over filling until edges meet up to create a half-moon. Pinch and press edges to seal. Carefully transfer to prepared baking sheet.

Brush top of each pocket with egg, then sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake until crust is golden brown and crisp, about 30 minutes. Let pockets cool slightly on baking sheet, then cut in half.

Meanwhile, whisk together yogurt, remaining 2 Tbsp. oil, and a big pinch of salt in a small bowl. Sprinkle yogurt sauce with a pinch of chile powder if desired.

Serve pockets with yogurt sauce.

CREAMY CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI SOUP

4 SERVINGS

One single chicken breast may seem like too little to serve four, but when bulked up with broccoli, carrot, celery, and tiny pasta shells, it makes for just the right amount of meatiness.

2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
1 medium carrot, peeled, coarsely chopped
1 celery stalk, thinly sliced
3 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt, plus more
2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 6–7.3-oz. box white cheddar & shells mac and cheese (such as Annie's or Kraft)
1 medium skinless, boneless chicken breast (about 8 oz.), cut into bite-size pieces
½ medium head of broccoli (about 5 oz.), coarsely chopped
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
Freshly ground pepper

Heat oil and butter in a medium Dutch oven or other heavy pot over medium-high until butter is melted. Add carrot, celery, garlic, and ½ tsp. Diamond Crystal or ¼ tsp. Morton kosher salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are slightly softened, about 3 minutes. Add flour and cook, stirring constantly, until slighted toasted, about 2 minutes. Pour in broth and 1½ cups water, increase heat to high, and bring to a boil.

Set cheese packet from macaroni and cheese aside; add shells to pot. Cook until very al dente, about 4 minutes. Add chicken; cook until almost cooked through, about 3 minutes. Add broccoli and cook until bright green and crisp-tender, about 2 minutes. Add cheese from reserved packet; whisk until combined, about 1 minute (pieces of vegetable or chicken may get stuck in the whisk, but it's still the best tool to use to ensure you have no lumps). Remove soup from heat. Whisk in Worcestershire sauce and season with salt and pepper. Ladle soup into bowls.

Add to Cart

Three more shelf-stable saviors we don't want to cook without

NEW YORK SHUK
PRESERVED LEMON PASTE

New York Shuk's **PRESERVED LEMON PASTE** ($15.95 for 10 oz.; nyshuk.com) is for citrus heads. It's bright, acidic, and slightly savory from the salt and bitter pith. Rather than keeping the salt-cured lemons whole, they seed and blend about three per jar, taking all the prep work out of using them in a recipe. It is more soupy than a paste, despite the name—I pour it right into sparkling water, spoon it on top of grilled vegetables, or mix it with olive oil and Dijon mustard for a punchy marinade perfect for nearly any protein. —*Kate Kassin*

Refried beans exist in the camp of Things I Will Simply Never Cook From Scratch—because as long as Amy's Organic Vegetarian Traditional **REFRIED BEANS** exist, I don't need to. They're creamy, rich, and never stodgy, flecked with pieces of bean that make them read as homemade. With a well-balanced level of seasoning and salt, they taste equally great wrapped into a burrito with grated cheddar, spread under fluffy eggs in breakfast sandwiches, or stirred into stock to make a more satisfying soup. —*Alaina Chou*

Amy's
REFRIED BEANS
TRADITIONAL

BROOKLYN DELHI
ROASTED GARLIC ACHAAR

There's a whole corner of my pantry dedicated to Brooklyn Delhi products. I adore their simmer sauces for weeknight meals and spoon their condiments on just about everything. But if I had to pick one jar, it would be the **ROASTED GARLIC ACHAAR** ($12 for 9 oz.; brooklyndelhi.com). It's deeply savory, a little spicy, a little sweet, and it has a vehement fan base. Stir it into Greek yogurt, then plop some fried eggs on top and scatter with herbs. Or mix it with mayo and slather on any sandwich—say, turkey-cheddar or avocado-sprout. —*Emma Laperruque*

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Matcha-Mango
Chia Pudding
P. 15

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RAINEY. FOOD STYLING BY TANEKA MORRIS. PROP STYLING BY TIM FERRO.

Last Call

A little something to sip on from Epicurious's vast archives

TURMERIC HOT TODDY

RECIPE BY CLAIRE SPROUSE
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEPH DE LEO

When the days grow shorter and the weather settles into a dreary overcast, it's helpful—if not downright necessary—to make your own sunshine. This is where the golden yellow Turmeric Hot Toddy comes in, a dandelion-hued hot cocktail you can ground with your favorite spirit.

The vibrant color comes from turmeric syrup that's made with hot water and a bit of sugar in a measuring glass or with a few shakes in a sealed mason jar. It creates an earthy, throat-tingling sensation similar to ginger that can be paired with a floral gin, smoky mezcal, or the complex flavors of brown spirits like scotch or rum. Amontillado sherry adds a hum of husky raisin flavor, and lemon juice adds a zingy finish.

Our syrup recipe yields up to four drinks should you want to share a sip with a companion to warm you both on a cold winter night. *—Sam Stone*

Combine ¼ **cup granulated sugar**, ¾ **tsp. ground turmeric**, and ½ cup hot water in a small jar. Cover and shake until sugar is dissolved. (You will have enough turmeric syrup to make 4 toddies.)

To make 1 toddy, combine **1½ oz. Amontillado sherry**, **1 oz. gin, mezcal, bourbon, scotch, or aged rum**, 1 oz. turmeric syrup, and ½ **oz. fresh lemon juice** in a pint glass or 16-oz. thermos. Top with 8 oz. hot water and stir gently to combine. Garnish with a **lemon wedge** if desired.

DO AHEAD: Syrup can be made 10 days ahead. Keep covered and chill. Shake to reincorporate turmeric before using. *Makes 1*

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FOOD STYLING BY MICAH MORTON

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